

2009

# Implications of social support and culture in the context of work-related stress

Maria Amren  
*San Jose State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd\\_theses](https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses)

---

## Recommended Citation

Amren, Maria, "Implications of social support and culture in the context of work-related stress" (2009). *Master's Theses*. 3637.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.5b33-33kj>  
[https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd\\_theses/3637](https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses/3637)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses and Graduate Research at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@sjsu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@sjsu.edu).

IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL SUPPORT AND CULTURE IN THE CONTEXT  
OF WORK-RELATED STRESS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Psychology

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the requirement for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Maria Amren

May 2009

UMI Number: 1470970

### INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



---

UMI Microform 1470970

Copyright 2009 by ProQuest LLC

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

---

ProQuest LLC  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

© 2009

Maria Amren


ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

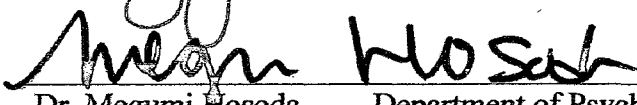
SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

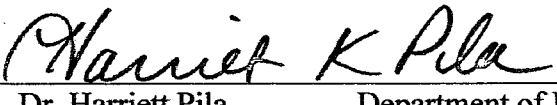
The Undersigned Thesis Committee Approves the Thesis Titled  
IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL SUPPORT AND CULTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF  
WORK-RELATED STRESS

by  
Maria Amren

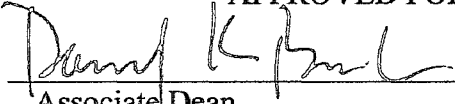
APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

  
Dr. Sharon Glazer, Department of Psychology 4/4/09  
Date

  
Dr. Megumi Hosoda, Department of Psychology 3-24-09  
Date

  
Dr. Harriett Pila, Department of Psychology 3-24-09  
Date

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

  
Associate Dean 5/5/09  
Date

## ABSTRACT

### IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL SUPPORT AND CULTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF WORK-RELATED STRESS

by Maria Amren

The goals of this cross-cultural study were (1) to examine levels of role stressors and social support across cultures, (2) to investigate the relationships between role stressors and favorable attitudes and between social support and favorable attitudes, and (3) to examine the extent to which social support moderates the relationship between role stressors and favorable attitudes. The sample consisted of 1,796 employees in an Human Resources consulting firm across nine cultural regions. Mean scores on the main study variables (i.e., role stressors, coworker social support, supervisor social support, organizational social support, and favorable attitudes) significantly differed between cultural regions. Organizational social support buffered the stressor-favorable attitude relationship in USA and Canada, whereas a reverse buffering effect was found in Germanic Europe for both supervisor- and organizational-social support. Similarly, in Latin Europe, supervisor social support had a reverse buffering effect on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship. Implications of the study are discussed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to genuinely recognize Dr. Glazer for her support, creativity, and motivation to challenge myself with this thesis. I have truly enjoyed working with her and learned from her expertise and appreciate her dedication to my development within the field of I/O Psychology. Dr. Hosoda has provided feedback and support from a different perspective, which helped me keep the thesis to a manageable span of control. Without Dr. Pila, I would not have been as objective in my view of work-related stress; she provided insight and knowledge from her experience on the job.

I dedicate this manuscript to my family in Sweden who is always there for me. I also want to recognize my husband for his continued support, encouragement, and belief in my abilities. I could not have done this without him. Being pregnant helped me get going on the thesis as I wanted to spend as much time as possible with Ida once she arrived in November 2007. She is the sunshine in our lives.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
<i>Stress Framework</i> .....	8
<i>Social Support in Relation to Stress</i> .....	10
<i>Summary of Study Goals</i> .....	13
Literature Review .....	13
<i>Stressors</i> .....	13
<i>Favorable Attitudes</i> .....	14
<i>Stressor-Attitude Relationship</i> .....	15
<i>Social Support as a Moderator</i> .....	16
<i>Culture</i> .....	17
<i>GLOBE Cultural Values</i> .....	18
<i>USA and Canada</i> .....	20
<i>Australia and New Zealand</i> .....	21
<i>Anglo Europe</i> .....	22
<i>Latin America</i> .....	22
<i>Confucian Asia</i> .....	24
<i>Southern Asia</i> .....	25
<i>Germanic Europe</i> .....	26
<i>Nordic Europe</i> .....	27
<i>Latin Europe</i> .....	29



<i>Comparison of Role Stressors across Cultures .....</i>	29
<i>Hypothesis 1 .....</i>	30
<i>Comparison of Social Support across Cultures.....</i>	31
<i>Hypothesis 2.....</i>	32
<i>Relationship between Stressors and Attitudes across Cultures .....</i>	32
<i>Hypothesis 3.....</i>	33
<i>Relationship between Social Support and Attitudes across Cultures .....</i>	33
<i>Hypothesis 4.....</i>	34
<i>Moderating Effects of Social Support on Stressor-Attitude Relationship</i> <i>across Cultures.....</i>	34
<i>Influence of In-Group Collectivism .....</i>	35
<i>Hypothesis 5a.....</i>	37
<i>Hypothesis 5b.....</i>	37
<i>Summary .....</i>	37
Method .....	38
<i>Participants.....</i>	38
<i>Procedure.....</i>	41
<i>Measures .....</i>	41
<i>Role stressors .....</i>	45
<i>Organizational social support .....</i>	45
<i>Supervisor social support .....</i>	45

<i>Coworker social support</i> .....	48
<i>Favorable attitudes</i> .....	49
<i>Statistical Analyses</i> .....	49
Results .....	50
<i>Level of Role Stressors across Cultures</i> .....	50
<i>Level of Social Support across Cultures</i> .....	52
<i>Relationship between Stressors, Social Support, and Attitudes across</i> <i>Cultures</i> .....	55
<i>Moderating Effects of Social Support across Cultures</i> .....	56
Discussion.....	63
<i>Level of Role Stressors across Cultures</i> .....	63
<i>Level of Social Support across Cultures</i> .....	65
<i>Relationship between Stressors and Attitudes across Cultures</i> .....	68
<i>Relationship between Social Support and Attitudes across Cultures</i> .....	68
<i>Social Support as a Moderator of Stressor-Attitude Relationship</i> .....	69
<i>Implications</i> .....	74
<i>Limitations</i> .....	74
<i>Future Research and Direction</i> .....	78
Conclusion .....	79
References.....	81
Appendix A: <i>Letter of Permission</i> .....	88

Appendix B: <i>IRB Approval</i> .....	89
Appendix C: <i>Survey Questions</i> .....	90
Appendix D: <i>Factor Analyses within Regions</i> .....	92

## LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 1.</i> Relative location of each of the seven regions on GLOBE's (2004) cultural values. ....	5
<i>Figure 2.</i> Relative location of each of three Anglo regions (Australia and New Zealand, USA and Canada, and Anglo Europe) on Schwartz's (1999) cultural values .....	7
<i>Figure 3.</i> Framework for studying occupational stress. ....	8
<i>Figure 4.</i> Moderating effect of organizational- and supervisor-social support on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship in Germanic Europe.....	60
<i>Figure 5.</i> Moderating effect of organizational social support on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship in USA and Canada .....	61
<i>Figure 6.</i> Moderating effect of supervisor social support on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship in Latin Europe .....	62

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. <i>Definition of the GLOBE Cultural Values</i> .....	3
Table 2. <i>Definition of Schwartz's (1999) Cultural Values</i> .....	6
Table 3. <i>Job Level, Tenure, Age, and Sex (%) by Region</i> .....	40
Table 4. <i>Factor Loadings Using Principal Components Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation</i> .....	43
Table 5. <i>Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations between Role Stressors, Social Support Sources, and Favorable Attitudes</i> .....	46
Table 6. <i>Analysis of Variance of Role Stressors, Supervisor Support, Organizational Support, Coworker Support, and Favorable Attitudes across Nine Cultural Regions</i> .....	51
Table 7. <i>Interactions between Social Support and Role Stressors on Favorable Attitudes Controlling for Job Level</i> .....	58

## Introduction

Ample evidence shows that cultures of the world are getting more and more interconnected and that the business world is becoming increasingly global. As economic borders come down, cultural barriers will most likely go up and present new challenges and opportunities in businesses (House, Hanges, Javidian, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004, p.1).

Increasing globalization introduces employees to an internationally diverse workplace that requires them to understand cultural differences that would aid interactions with coworkers, supervisors, and subordinates. Culture is the human-made part of the environment (Hofstede, 1980) and is defined as customs, traditions, values, beliefs, language, and history shared among a group of people passed on from one generation to another (Greenberg & Baron, 1999). Culture affects all aspects of human behavior and cognition; thus, it also affects our perceptions of stressors we are exposed to and our responses to those stressors, including strains (Glazer, 2008). The work-related stressor-strain relationship across cultures is one research area that needs further exploration for at least four reasons (Glazer; Glazer & Beehr, 2005). First, occupational stress theories are presumed universal when, in fact, they have been minimally tested comparatively across cultures. Second, culture affects the stressors we perceive (i.e., the interpretation of situations as stressors). Third, culture influences the resources we use to cope with stressors. Fourth, culture impacts our psychological, behavioral, and physiological responses to stressors.

In this study, the relationship between role stressors and favorable job-related attitudes (i.e., employee satisfaction, employee commitment, and pride) is compared across nine cultural regions comprised of 25 countries. The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) research results (House et al., 2004), as well as Schwartz's (1999) cultural values serve as the frameworks for categorizing countries into regions. The GLOBE study is used because values are part of the defining attributes of culture and House et al.'s study was conducted in the business sector (albeit not in a single multinational company, as in the current study). The GLOBE study found nine cultural values that could characterize cultures - Performance Orientation, Assertiveness, Future Orientation, Humane Orientation, Institutional Collectivism, In-Group Collectivism, Gender Egalitarianism, Power Distance, and Uncertainty Avoidance (see Table 1 for definitions and Figure 1 for relative location of each region on GLOBE's cultural values). Schwartz's cultural dimensions are also used in order to substantiate the characterization and categorization of the countries into the nine cultural regions<sup>1</sup> (see Table 2 for definitions of Schwartz's cultural values and Figure 2 for relative location of Anglo cultural regions on Schwartz's cultural values).

---

<sup>1</sup> Note that in House et al.'s (2004) study, Anglo countries were examined as one cultural region and are depicted as such in Figure 1. In the present study, I divide Anglo countries into three distinct cultural regions, including USA and Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and Anglo Europe on the basis of Schwartz's (1999) cultural values.

Table 1

*Definition of the GLOBE Cultural Values*

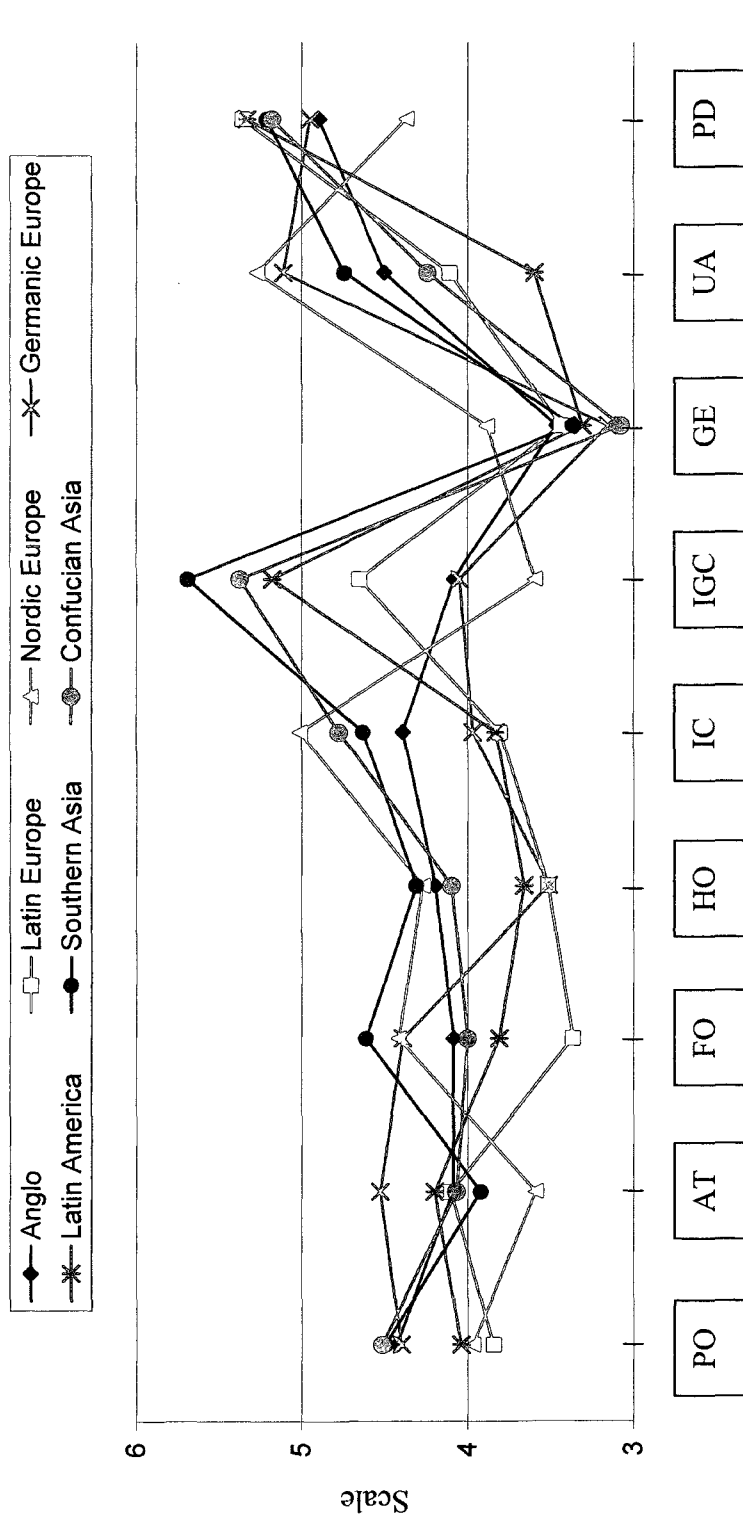
Dimension	Definition (Sample Item)
Performance Orientation	The degree to which an organization or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvements and excellence. (Students are encouraged to strive for continuously improved performance).
Assertiveness	The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships. (People are generally dominant in their relationships with others).
Future Orientation	The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies engage in future-oriented behaviors, such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying individual or collective gratification. (More people live for the present rather than for the future).
Humane Orientation	The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others. (People are generally very tolerant of mistakes).
Institutional Collectivism	The degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action. (Leaders encourage group loyalty even if individual goals suffer).
In-Group Collectivism	The degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families. (Employees feel great loyalty toward this organization).



Table 1 (Continued)

Dimension	Definition (Sample Item)
Gender Egalitarianism	The degree to which an organization or a society minimizes gender role differences while promoting gender equality. (Boys are encouraged more than girls to attain a higher education).
Power Distance	The degree to which members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be stratified and concentrated at higher levels of an organization or government. (Followers are expected to obey their leaders without question).
Uncertainty Avoidance	The extent to which members of an organization or society strives to avoid uncertainty by relying on established social norms, rituals, and bureaucratic practices. (Most people lead (should lead) highly structured lives with few unexpected events).

*Note.* Adapted from *Culture, Leadership, and Organization* (pp. 11-13, 30), by House et al., (2004). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Copyright 2004 by Sage. Adapted with permission of the publisher (see Appendix A).

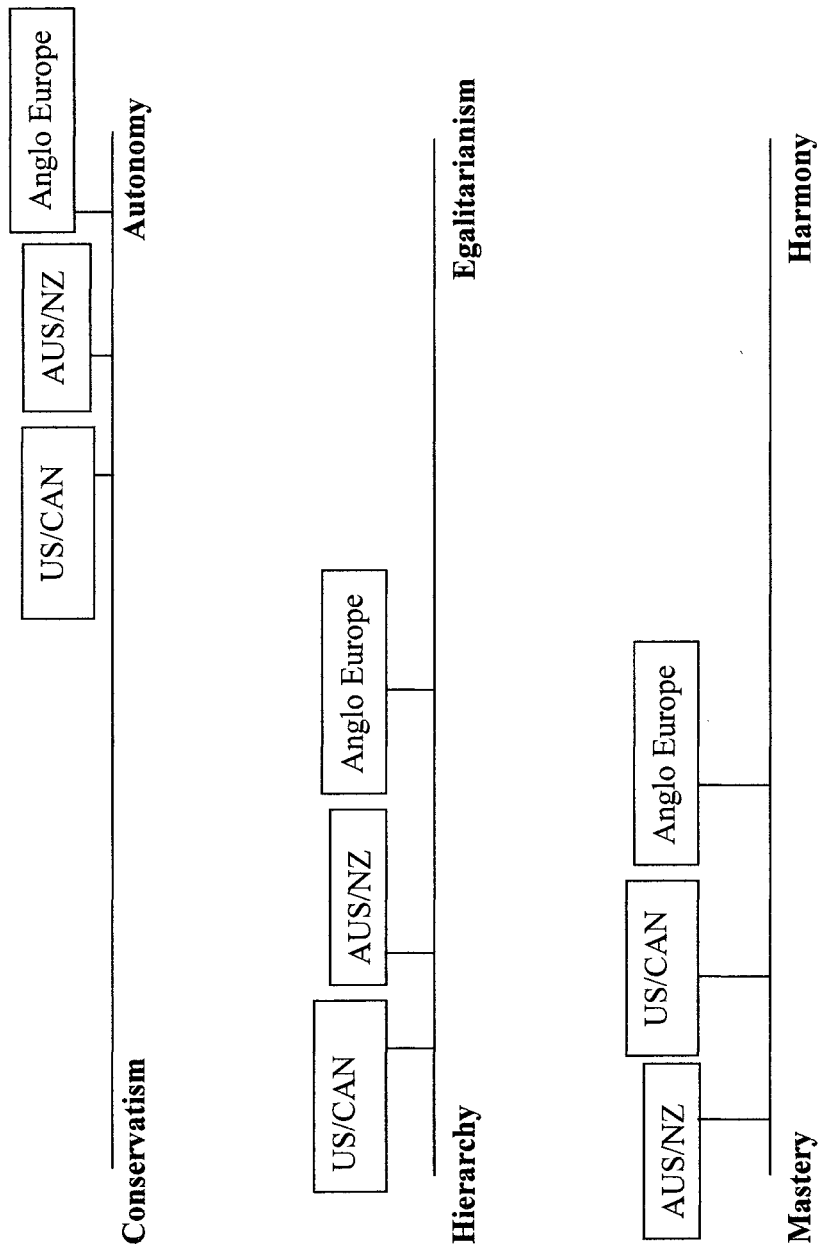


*Figure 1. Relative location of each of the seven regions on GLOBE's (2004) cultural values.*  
*Note.* GLOBE scores range from 1 (Low) to 7 (High). However, in order to show the relative cultural differences or similarities among regions, the range for each cultural value is restricted within a maximum range for the cultural value. PO=Performance Orientation, AT=Assertiveness, FO=Future Orientation, HO=Human Orientation, IC=Institutional Collectivism, IGC=In-Group Collectivism, GE=Gender Egalitarianism, PD=Power Distance, UA=Uncertainty Avoidance.

Table 2

*Definition of Schwartz's (1999) Cultural Values*

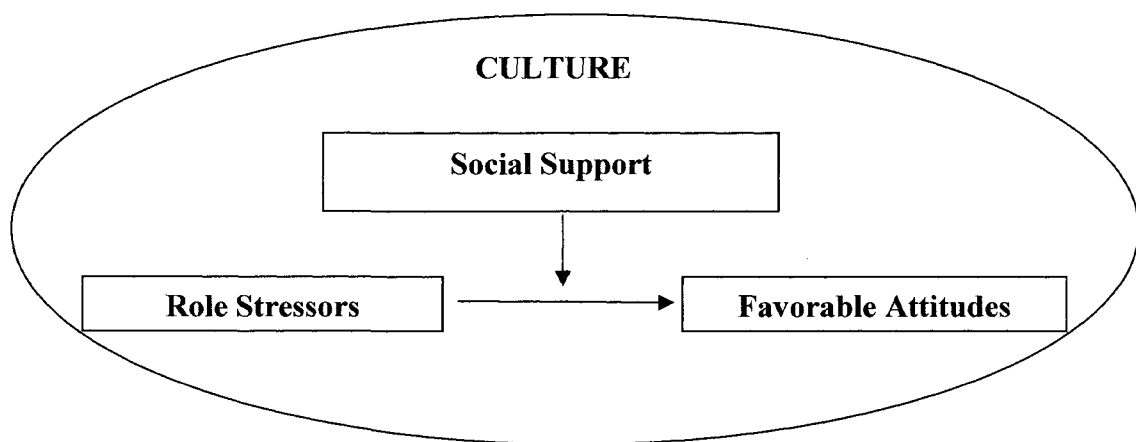
Values	Definition
Intellectual Autonomy	A cultural emphasis on the desirability of individuals independently pursuing their own ideas and intellectual directions (curiosity, broadmindedness, creativity).
Affective Autonomy	A cultural emphasis on the desirability of individuals independently pursuing affectively positive experience (pleasure, exciting life, varied life).
Conservatism	A cultural emphasis on maintenance of the status quo, propriety, and restraint of actions or inclinations that might disrupt the solidary group or the traditional order (social order, respect for tradition, family security, wisdom).
Hierarchy	A cultural emphasis on the legitimacy of an unequal distribution of power, roles and resources (social power, authority, humility, wealth).
Egalitarianism	A cultural emphasis on transcendence of selfish interests in favor of voluntary commitment to promoting the welfare of others (equality, social justice, freedom, responsibility, honesty).
Mastery	A cultural emphasis on getting ahead through active self-assertion (ambition, success, daring, competence).
Harmony	A cultural emphasis on fitting harmoniously into the environment (unity with nature, protecting the environment, world of beauty).



*Figure 2.* Relative location of each of three Anglo regions (Australia and New Zealand, USA and Canada, and Anglo Europe) on Schwartz's (1999) cultural values.  
*Note.* AUS/NZ = Australia and New Zealand, US/CAN = United States and Canada

### *Stress Framework*

In this paper, the transactional framework (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) is used to study stress. The transactional model depicts stress as the interaction between environmental conditions or situations (i.e., stressors) and one's coping resources (e.g., social support) that might produce negative responses (i.e., strains) (Semmer, McGrath, & Beehr, 2005). Encompassing the entire transactional framework is culture (Beehr & Glazer, 2001), which demonstrates that stressors, strains, and their relationship are partly dependent on culture. Differences in cultural values will likely impact individuals' perceptions of stressors and their abilities to deal with those stressors (Glazer, 2008; Glazer & Beehr, 2005). For example, employees in cultures that embrace collaboration and teamwork may have different approaches to cope with stressful situations than employees in cultures that do not value collaboration and teamwork as much (Glazer, 2006). Figure 3 illustrates the conceptual model examined in the present study.



*Figure 3.* Framework for studying occupational stress.

Numerous aspects of the organization or relationships in the organization can produce strain. In the present study, I examine an index of role stressors, which is comprised of three potentially strain producing events, or stressors. These are role ambiguity, role overload, and inadequate resources. Role ambiguity is the lack of information one has about his or her job; it makes the employee unclear about what is expected of him or her (Beehr & Glazer, 2005). Role overload is when someone is given too much work to do in too little time (Beehr & Glazer). Inadequate resources refer to lack of information and equipment provided to employees to perform their work. Together, these three role stressors may negatively influence employees' work attitudes.

Although role stressors are commonly studied in occupational stress research, little research has been done across cultures to better understand the relationship between role stressors and work attitudes. Studies that have examined cultural differences have, for the most part, only included two to four countries (e.g., Glazer & Beehr, 2005; Liu, Spector, & Shi, 2007; Narayanan, Menon, & Spector, 1999). This suggests that more studies are needed to better understand how culture influences the relationship between role stressors and work attitudes.

Work attitudes refer to evaluative beliefs about work. Often, researchers refer to negative attitudes as psychological strains (Beehr & Glazer, 2005). Strain is the result of individuals not being able to cope with a stressor(s). In this study an index of 'favorable attitudes' (i.e., employee satisfaction, employee commitment,

and pride) is studied as the focal outcome variable. Extensive research (see review by Beehr & Glazer, 2001; study by Jex & Bliese, 1999; and meta-analysis by Podsakoff, LePine, & LePine, 2007) indicates that stressors negatively relate to favorable attitudes.

### *Social Support in Relation to Stress*

Social support relates to stressors, strains, and the stressor-strain relationship in three ways. First is the direct effects model, which “postulates that social support reduces the level of strain regardless of the intensity of the stressor experienced” (Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999, p. 315). Second, the mediating effect model explains how stressors relate to strains. For example, as one experiences stressors, one seeks social support in order to cope with those stressors, which may in turn lead to reduced strains (Beehr, Farmer, Glazer, Gudanowski, & Nair, 2003; Bowling, Beehr, Johnson, Semmer, Hendricks, & Webster, 2004). Third, the moderating effects model explains when and at what magnitude social support will affect the relationship between stressors and strains. Two moderating effects can be found. One is the buffering effect and it shows that the relationship between stressors and strains will be less positive for people with high social support than for people with low social support. The reverse buffering effect shows that as stressors increase, strain increases more for those with high social support than for those who with low social support.

Social support is further distinguished by two types of support, structural and functional, as well as different sources of support (e.g., coworkers, supervisors, organization, family and friends; Beehr & Glazer, 2001). Structural support includes any person who is part of one's life. Beehr and Glazer (2005) assert that "...nearly all employees can be said to 'obtain' structural support, making it almost a given constant in most samples of workers" (p. 16). Functional support, in contrast, serves a distinct purpose. It is divided into emotional support and instrumental support (Beehr & Glazer). Emotional support relates to support we receive from others that shows that they care for us. Instrumental support relates to support through information, guidance on how to complete a task, or tangible material goods (Beehr & Glazer; Bowling et al., 2004; Cohen & Wills, 1985). In this study, both emotional- and instrumental-social support are captured for each source of social support (i.e., coworker, supervisor, and organizational). As described by Beehr (1998) emotional- and instrumental-social support are likely highly correlated and therefore it is common that researchers (e.g., Glazer, 2006) combine the two in their social support measures.

The majority of occupational stress research has examined coworker- and supervisor-social support, as those are the resources available in the work setting (Beehr et al., 2003; Bowling et al., 2004; Glazer, 2006; Jawahar, Stone, & Kisamore, 2007). However, fewer studies (e.g., Jawahar et al.) have considered organizational social support. The present study examines coworker social support, supervisor



social support, as well as organizational social support. Organizational social support is defined as "...the extent to which employees perceive that their contributions are valued by their organization and that the organization cares about their well-being" (Jawahar et al., p. 147). Further, while coworker- and supervisor-social support are each perceived from one source, organizational social support is different in that it is part of the organizational culture and is thought to develop over time as employees interact with different people in the organization (Jawahar et al.). Perceived organizational social support is an important variable to include in any study related to work attitudes as it positively relates to commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (Chen, Eisenberger, Johnson, Sucharski, & Aselage, in press; Shore & Wayne, 1993), negatively relates to withdrawal and absenteeism (Allen, 2003; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986), and moderates the stressor-strain relationship (Jawahar et al.; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Organizational social support was also found to positively relate to organizational satisfaction in a cross-cultural study done in five cultural regions (Berlin & Glazer, 2007). Organizational social support is included in this study to confirm the positive relationship between favorable attitudes and organizational social support as well as to enhance the understanding of how organizational social support might moderate the relationship between stressors and favorable attitudes toward the organization.

### *Summary of Study Goals*

The present study expands current research on occupational stress by using the transactional model to test a Western based theory and examine role stressors, favorable attitudes, and social support across nine cultural regions. First, mean scores on role stressors and each source of social support are compared cross-culturally. Second, the direct relationships between role stressors and favorable attitudes, as well as the relationships between social support and favorable attitudes across cultures are explored. Finally, the extent to which coworker-, supervisor-, and organizational-social support each moderate the relationship between stressors and favorable attitudes across cultures is examined.

In the following section, current research on the stressor–favorable attitude relationship is discussed. Culture will be defined and characteristics of the nine cultural regions will be delineated. Recent findings from cross-cultural stress research will be presented, with focus on role stressors, favorable attitudes, social support, and the interaction of social support on the role stressors-favorable attitudes relationship. Hypotheses will be posed throughout the literature review.

## Literature Review

### *Stressors*

In occupational stress research, scholars focus on work-related stressors, such as physical, psychological, and social stressors (Beehr, 1998). Physical stressors may include temperature, noise, and office layout. Psychological stressors

are imagined or perceived. They are typically combined with social stressors that reflect social relationships. Thus, psychosocial stressors in the work environment include factors that employees perceive as restricting or limiting their ability to fulfill their roles, such as role overload, lack of resources, or role ambiguity (Beehr & Glazer, 2005). Beehr and Glazer note that the most commonly studied psychosocial stressors are role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload. Role stressors negatively relate to job-related attitudes, such as job satisfaction and commitment (Jex & Bliese, 1999; Podsakoff et al., 2007).

#### *Favorable Attitudes*

Although stressors can lead to unfavorable responses, including physiological (e.g., high blood pressure) and/or behavioral strains (e.g., absenteeism), this study focuses on psychological outcomes related to one's relationship with the organization (Cooper, Dewe, & O'Driscoll, 2001). Psychological outcomes are evaluative or emotional responses people may develop as a result of stressors. Psychological outcomes can be individually-based or organizationally-based. Individual psychological outcomes directly affect the individual employee, but not the organization (Beehr & Glazer, 2005). Examples of individual psychological outcomes include anxiety and depression. Organizational psychological outcomes impact the individuals, but more directly affect the organization (Beehr & Glazer). Examples of favorable organizational psychological outcomes include job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention to stay.

In this study, I focus on favorable organizational psychological outcomes, or attitudes, measured using an index comprised of employee satisfaction, employee commitment, and pride in the organization. The current organizational attitude measure depicts items in a positive light and therefore a favorable attitude index (and not a strain index) was developed.

### *Stressor-Attitude Relationship*

In a meta-analysis conducted by Podsakoff et al. (2007), hindrance stressors, including situational constraints, hassles, organizational politics, resource inadequacies, role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload negatively correlate with job satisfaction, as well as affective, normative, and overall organizational commitment. According to Jex and Bliese (1999), work overload negatively correlates with job satisfaction and organizational commitment; those experiencing a higher workload report lower levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In a study among Chinese kindergarten principals, Wong, Cheuk, and Rosen (2000) also found that work stressors negatively relate with job satisfaction. Glazer and Beehr (2005) confirmed that the stressor-strain relationship is positive across cultures, but the magnitude of the relationship differs significantly across some cultures due to contextual differences in the nations. The positive relationship between role overload and anxiety, for example, differs significantly between Hungary and USA, as well as between Hungary and Italy. This suggests that while

the correlations between stressors and attitudes would be negative across cultures the magnitude might differ (Glazer & Beehr).

### *Social Support as a Moderator*

Despite much research on the moderating effects of social support on stressor–strain relationships, results remain inconclusive (Beehr & Glazer, 2001). A meta-analysis of social support shows that indeed social support buffers the relationship between stressors and strains (see Cohen & Wills, 1985; Viswesvaran et al., 1999), such that social support helps to decrease strain when stressors are perceived. For example, Bowling et al. (2004) found that in United States, coworker social support moderates the relationship between organizational constraints (e.g., lack of equipment and supplies) and job satisfaction, such that the negative relationship between organizational constraints and job satisfaction was weaker when social support was high than when it was low. Social support can also have a reverse buffering effect (Kaufman & Beehr, 1986; Liang & Bogat, 1994; Viswesvaran et al.); as stressors increase, strain increases more for those perceiving social support than for those who do not perceive social support. One possible reason for this is that when the source of the stressor and the source of social support are the same (i.e., source congruency), individuals may feel more (vs. less) pressure (Beehr et al., 2003). While the mixed results could be due to source congruency, it may also be that mixed results are due to cultures in which the studies were conducted (Beehr & Glazer). Indeed, Liang and Bogat, found a reverse buffering

effect among Chinese students where those perceiving social support perceive more illness due to stress than those perceiving little social support. In this case it seems that when social support is perceived during a stressful period, the mere presence of social support indicates that a stressor is a greater problem than one would otherwise think if one did not have support. Despite only a few articles addressing social support across cultures (exceptions include Beehr & Glazer; Bhagat, Kedia, Harvestion, & Triandis, 2002; Taylor, Sherman, Kim, Jarcho, Takagi, & Dunagan, 2004), there is evidence that culture matters (Glazer, 2006).

### *Culture*

As explained by Beehr and Glazer (2001) "...national culture is a concept that combines, usually in an unspecified way, both nation and culture" (p. 21). Nation refers to the geography of a country, whereas culture is more complex and refers to any group that shares behavioral rules, values, attitudes, feelings, beliefs, thinking patterns, role expectations, customs, symbols, and meanings assigned to words and actions (Beehr & Glazer). Culture has become an important facet to examine as businesses expand across borders, because sources of support may mitigate or enhance desired attitudes differently depending on cultural values. In this study, nine cultural regions, comprised of 25 countries, are examined. Below, descriptions of each cultural region are provided explaining how countries within a region share unique characteristics and how the regions differ from each other.

### *GLOBE Cultural Values*

The present study uses GLOBE's cultural values (House et al., 2004) to categorize and characterize cultural regions for a number of reasons. First, the GLOBE study is the most recent comprehensive cross-cultural study done in a workplace setting in comparison to Hofstede's (1980) study. Second, unlike Hofstede (who used data from one multinational company), GLOBE utilized only local firms that represented at least two of three industries, thereby making the cultural values more reflective of the national culture. Third, the sample in the present study resembles the demographic make-up of the GLOBE study, as business industry professionals are used and not teachers or students as in Schwartz's studies (1994, 1999). Fourth, GLOBE is the most recent assessment of national cultures and data are available for 21 of 25 countries sampled in the current study (exceptions are Norway, Sri Lanka, Belgium, and Luxemburg). Finally, the nine cultural values tested in the GLOBE study were developed *a priori*.

Six of the nine cultural dimensions (i.e., Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, Institutional Collectivism, In-Group Collectivism, Gender Egalitarianism, and Assertiveness) are based on Hofstede's four cultural dimensions (i.e., Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, Individualism/Collectivism, Femininity/Masculinity). The Humane Orientation and Future Orientation values are based on Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's (1961) study. Performance Orientation is found in McClelland's (1961) Need for Achievement variable. The GLOBE values

used in this study reflect actions taken by employees, also referred to as the “as is” practices and not the way employees feel their culture “should be” (House et al.). Table 1 provides the definition and a sample item for each of the cultural values. Figure 1 provides the location of each cultural region on the nine GLOBE cultural values.

The GLOBE study found strong correlations between its cultural values and some of Schwartz’s (1999) cultural values (House et al., 2004). For example, GLOBE’s Uncertainty Avoidance values positively correlate with Schwartz’s Embeddedness (or Conservatism) values and negatively correlate with Schwartz’s Intellectual Autonomy values. In other words, the more rules and regulations instilled by the nation the more the culture emphasizes status quo and not individual preferences. Schwartz’s Hierarchy values correlate positively with GLOBE’s Power Distance values. Schwartz’s Egalitarianism values correlate positively with GLOBE’s Gender Egalitarianism values, but negatively with its Assertiveness values.

In the current study, three Anglo regions, USA and Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and Anglo Europe, significantly differ on the main study variables. Because GLOBE’s values and Schwartz’s cultural values correlate significantly, Schwartz’s cultural values are used to describe these three distinct Anglo regions. Definitions of Schwartz’s cultural values are provided in Table 2. Figure 2 depicts the location of each geographically distinct Anglo region on Schwartz’s cultural



values. Based on Figure 2 the greatest visual distinction is along Hierarchy and Egalitarianism, where Australia and New Zealand, and USA and Canada are more hierarchical than Anglo Europe.

*USA and Canada.* According to Schwartz (1999), Mastery (vs. Harmony), Affective Autonomy (vs. Conservatism), and Hierarchy (vs. Egalitarianism) characterize USA and Canada. These countries endorse achievement, feeling and pursuing positive experiences in life, rejecting status quo, and having little concern with fitting into the environment. These cultural values suggest that levels of role stressors will be lower in comparison to people in Conservative and Harmony cultures, because individuals will take matters into their own hands and resolve any role ambiguity, role overload, or inadequate resources by approaching the supervisor or the organization. For example, in the United States, communication tends to be direct and explicit, indicating that employees in USA and Canada would experience low levels of role stressors because managers may use a more direct approach to resolving conflict. As stated by Fu and Yukl (2000) “American managers...prefer to use tactics that involve directly confronting others with rational arguments, factual evidence, and suggested solutions” (p. 254). Glazer and Beehr (2005) found that Americans (in an Autonomous and Mastery culture) experience significantly less role ambiguity and role conflict than Hungarians (in a Harmonious and more Conservative culture). Furthermore, in cultures with high Mastery values and low Harmony values employees are likely to perceive high levels of supervisor- and

organizational-social support because individuals are encouraged to be self-assertive and focus on getting ahead and are not concerned with fitting into the social environment or group (Glazer, 2006). Social support from the supervisor or the organization may help individuals get ahead while coworker social support might not. Indeed, Glazer found that Anglos report less coworker social support than people in any other cultural region. Thus, participants from USA and Canada in this study are likely to perceive high levels of supervisor- and organizational-social support and low levels of coworker social support. With the high levels of supervisor- and organizational-social support, it is likely that U.S. Americans and Canadians will report high levels of favorable attitudes.

*Australia and New Zealand.* Horizontal Individualism, that is, “the individual views him- or her-self as relatively independent of the in-group, but also as more or less equal in status with others” (Bhagat et al., 2002, p. 210) characterizes Australia and New Zealand. Brew and Cairns (2004) describe the Australian culture as low-context in which individuals “value individualist goals...[,] separate person [from] issue, are confrontational, and use logic-deductive thinking and explicit codes of speech” (p. 333). It is, therefore, likely that participants in Australia and New Zealand would experience low levels of role stressors, because they would quickly seek clarity both from the supervisor and the organization. Australian and New Zealand cultures are more egalitarian (Schwartz, 1999) than USA and Canada and therefore have less of a focus on power differences and more of a focus on

cooperating and working together. This difference may result in higher levels of coworker social support in New Zealand and Australia in comparison to USA and Canada. It is also likely that levels of supervisor- and organizational-social support will be high in New Zealand and Australia. With high levels of social support, employees from New Zealand and Australia are likely to score high on favorable attitudes.

*Anglo Europe.* According to Schwartz (1999), and as described in Glazer and Beehr (2005), both Intellectual and Affective Autonomy and Mastery values characterize the Anglo European culture (i.e., UK). In such a culture, employees are likely to actively seek information, from coworkers, supervisor, and/or the organization in order to reduce role stressors. Although the level of role stressors will be similarly low to other Anglo cultures, Anglo Europeans will perceive more coworker social support as they score higher on Egalitarianism and lower on Mastery compared to the other Anglo regions. In terms of favorable attitudes, Anglo Europeans will likely score high on favorable attitudes since they probably receive social support from all three sources (coworker, supervisor, and the organization).

*Latin America.* The GLOBE (House et al., 2004) study found that Latin America scores high on Power Distance, high on In-Group Collectivism and low on Institutional Collectivism. Typically a high Power Distance culture is characterized by top-down communication potentially leading to high levels of role stressors. Role stressors are likely to be higher in such culture because lower level employees

have no way of interacting with their upper management to resolve any role stressors such as role overload and role ambiguity. Nevertheless, in Latin America the high In-Group Collectivism in combination with paternalistic leadership style may lead employees to experience low levels of role stressors. With the in-group being family and friends it is important for supervisors to establish trust and to become part of the in-group in order to engage and effectively manage subordinates. Evidently, it is not uncommon for subordinates to invite supervisors to family occasions, such as weddings and baptisms (Osland, De Franco, & Osland, 1999) indicating that it is not only in the supervisor's interest to become part of the in-group but also the subordinate's. Family and group cohesion are very important and thus it is expected that social support would be primarily sought from family and friends rather than coworkers, supervisors, or the organization (Beehr & Glazer, 2001; Taylor et al., 2004). However, because the supervisor may be part of the in-group and due to the large practice of family organizations in Latin America (Romero, 2004), there may be vague differences between coworkers, supervisors, and family; thus, coworker-, supervisor-, as well as organizational-social support may be high in Latin America. With an emphasis of the supervisor being part of the in-group, it is expected that employees perceive high supervisor social support resulting in low levels of role stressors. With the potential low levels of role stressors and high social support, Latin Americans are likely to report high levels of favorable attitudes.

*Confucian Asia.* The GLOBE (House et al., 2004) study found that Confucian Asia (i.e., China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan) is high on Institutional Collectivism, In-Group Collectivism, and Performance Orientation. In a culture endorsing Performance Orientation and Collectivism, achievement is encouraged and team work is important. In strong Collectivistic cultures, employees may feel obligated to one another and people are expected to not disturb group harmony (Glazer, 2006); thus, coworker social support is likely to be high in Confucian Asia. If supervisor social support is sought or perceived, group members may see it as favoritism, where one individual gets more attention than others. Such attention to one individual may disturb group harmony (Glazer) and, therefore, Confucian Asians are likely to perceive low levels of supervisor- and organizational-social support and high levels of coworker social support. According to the GLOBE study (and other cultural studies, e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1999), Confucian Asia endorses Power Distance and in high Power Distance cultures "...members must accept that they are inferior to some as well as superior to others" (p. 27). It is therefore likely that Confucian Asians would report low levels of role stressors, as it might suggest that one's supervisor provides necessary information to perform one's work duties. However, if a supervisor explicitly provides support, such support could create enhanced negative attitudes toward the organization in which case a reverse buffering effect would occur (i.e., as role stressors increase, favorable attitudes decreases more for those with high social support than for those who with

low social support). Therefore, it is likely that Confucian Asians perceive low levels of supervisor social support. Similarly, organizational social support might not be perceived as employees in a Collectivistic culture like Confucian Asia likely seek social support from their coworkers. While coworker social support would unlikely affect attitudes toward the organization because such support is expected (cultural norm), Confucian Asia scores high on In-Group Collectivism (House et al.) which may indicate high levels of favorable attitudes since employees in such cultures “...expresses pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organization or families” (p. 13).

*Southern Asia.* Southern Asia (i.e., India, Malaysia, Singapore, and Sri Lanka) is high on Humane Orientation and In-Group Collectivism (House et al., 2004), which reflect a culture that endorses close relationships within the family (Narayanan et al., 1999) and a concern for others. While Confucian Asia is high on both In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism, Southern Asia is high on In-Group Collectivism, but lower on Institutional Collectivism. These differences in Collectivistic values may indicate that there is more of an emphasis on individual success in Southern Asian cultures than in Confucian Asian cultures. These differences may lead to higher levels of supervisor- and organizational-social support in Southern Asia than in Confucian Asia because supervisors’ individual attention to a group member may not have the same effect of disturbing group harmony as it does in cultures endorsing high Institutional Collectivism. In line with

this description, Narayanan et al. found that Indians perceive significantly higher levels of supervisor social support and family social support than U.S. Americans. In addition, Pal and Saksvik (2008) found high levels of coworker social support in India.

These findings indicate that individuals in Southern Asian cultures perceive high levels of social support, primarily from family and coworkers, but also from supervisors and the organization to some extent. Because of the high value of Humane Orientation and little emphasis on Institutional Collectivism, or group loyalty, it may be that social support is perceived from coworkers, supervisors, as well as the organization. Similar to Confucian Asia and Latin America, Southern Asians are likely to perceive low levels of role stressors due to traditionally endorsing Power Distance (Hofstede, 1980). It may be that Southern Asians report higher levels of favorable attitudes than Confucian Asians due to greater acceptance of supervisor- and organizational-social support in combination with high In-Group Collectivism.

*Germanic Europe.* Germanic Europe (i.e., Belgium, Germany, Luxemburg, Netherlands, and Switzerland) is high on Performance Orientation and Assertiveness (House et al., 2004), indicating a direct and assertive communication style and a drive for success. Similar to Hofstede's (1980) Masculinity value (i.e., where assertiveness, success, money, competition and independent decision making are valued and there is a significant differences between women's and men's roles),

Assertive cultures endorse competition, toughness, and dominance (House et al.). Germanic Europe is also high on Uncertainty Avoidance, reflecting a culture where rules and control are emphasized and leadership is characterized by a transactional style (Kuchinke, 1999). The combination of high Uncertainty Avoidance (i.e., clear rules) and Assertiveness (i.e., direct communication) probably reduces work-related stressors as structured mechanisms are available and people are encouraged to seek information, clarity, and resources.

Germanic Europe is low on both In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism (House et al., 2004) indicating an Individualistic culture where reward systems are based on individual contributions. Consequently, employees in Germanic Europe would likely seek social support from both supervisors and the organization in order to achieve their individual goals. As Dormann and Zapf (1999) found, supervisor social support moderates the relationship between stressors and strains in a sample of citizens from former East Germany, whereas coworker support does not. This may indicate that in a culture encouraging drive for success and individualism, supervisor- and organizational-social support would yield an ameliorative effect on the stressor-strain relationship, but not coworker support. Attitudes toward the organization would likely be influenced by how much support the worker receives in order to fulfill his or her role.

*Nordic Europe.* Countries in Nordic Europe (i.e., Denmark, Sweden, and Norway) are low on Power Distance as reflected in organizations' flat structures and



mutual respect independent of authority or level within the company (Francesco & Gold, 1998). People in Nordic Europe do not value hierarchical relationships, and although respect is important, it is not solely directed toward authority figures. In fact, Nordics are not "...comfortable with power differences, such as social class distinctions or organizational ranking. Rank differences are ignored in certain situations, for example, when a subordinate makes a complaint to her boss' boss" (Francesco & Gold, p. 24). The Nordic's high score on Institutional Collectivism reflects the team or communal approach to decision-making (House et al., 2004), whereas low In-Group Collectivism indicates that people are independent (House et al.) and do not necessarily identify with specific groups. In addition, Nordic Europeans endorse Uncertainty Avoidance indicating an emphasis and reliance on bureaucratic processes and little tolerance for uncertainties. In the Nordic European culture, where there is little difference between levels of employees and where participative decision-making is encouraged, there may be little structure around responsibilities and roles potentially leading to high role stressors. Because of the low Power Distance, low In-Group Collectivism, high Institutional Collectivism, and high Uncertainty Avoidance it is likely that Nordic Europeans accept and seek social support from coworkers, supervisors, and the organization. Thus, the effects of role stressors would be mitigated by coworker-, supervisor-, and organizational-social support, and thus attitudes may be more positive when there is no social support.

*Latin Europe.* In the GLOBE (House et al., 2004) study, Latin Europe (i.e., France and Italy) is low on Humane Orientation and Institutional Collectivism. Low scores on Humane Orientation indicate little concern for others. On the one hand, this suggests that such cultures do not provide support for one another since people are more independent of one another and are expected to solve their own problems. For this reason, Latin Europeans are expected to report less social support than people in other regions. On the other hand, Latin European cultures are characterized by Schwartz' (1994) Autonomy values (see Table 2) and in such cultures supervisor social support is broadly accepted and may help to mitigate the effects of stressors on attitudes. Glazer and Beehr (2005) found that Italians report high levels of role stressors compared to USA, UK, and Hungary. This may be due to low Institutional Collectivism indicating a lack of collaboration and sharing of resources. In such an environment, role stressors are likely to be high.

#### *Comparison of Role Stressors across Cultures*

Uncertainty Avoidance and Power Distance may be cultural characteristics influencing levels of role stressors. Uncertainty Avoidance cultures emphasize rules, policies, and regulations. Employees in such cultures tend to be less tolerant of uncertainties potentially resulting in high levels of role stressors. In fact, Peterson and colleagues (1995) state that managers in Uncertainty Avoidance cultures tend to be more susceptible to stressful events than managers in cultures with lower Uncertainty Avoidance. Peterson et al. also argue that structurally rooted role

stressors, such as role conflict, are likely to be noticed more in high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures than low Uncertainty Avoidance cultures. Peterson and colleagues found that Power Distance values positively correlate with role overload and negatively correlate with role ambiguity. This may be because cultures with high Power Distance emphasize following up the ranks to seek clarity, but at the same time those in lower levels feel restricted from stating that their workload is too high and thus workload continuous to mount. The combination of high Uncertainty Avoidance and low Power Distance may result in higher levels of role stressors for two reasons. First, employees may not handle uncertainties well and they may want to have clear specific rules and processes of how to complete work. Second, in low Power Distance cultures, equality is emphasized and roles may not be distinct and clearly defined between levels of employees. Indeed, Joiner's (2001) study, conducted in Greece (a high Uncertainty Avoidance and low Power Distance culture; Hofstede, 1980), showed that hierarchy negatively relates to job-related stressors. Based on this research is it hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 1.* People in cultures high on Power Distance and low Uncertainty Avoidance (e.g., Latin America) will report lower levels of role stressors than those in low Power Distance and high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures (e.g., Nordic Europe). Participants in all other cultural regions will fall in between Latin America and Nordic Europe.

### *Comparison of Social Support across Cultures*

The level of supervisor emotional and instrumental social support across cultures may differ depending on cultural values (Beehr & Glazer, 2001). In cultures with low scores on Collectivism (i.e., In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism), individuals work independently and are not concerned with group harmony but more concerned with achieving their individual goals. It is, therefore, likely that employees in Individualistic cultures seek supervisor social support to help their advancement toward individual goals. In Collectivistic cultures, however, it is more likely that individuals seek social support from coworkers since the focus in Collectivistic cultures is on common goals and group harmony. Furthermore, in contrast to Collectivistic cultures, individual attention is not perceived as favoritism by other group members in Individualistic cultures; thus, supervisor- and organizational-social support is reported more in Individualistic cultures (Glazer, 2006) than in Collectivistic cultures.

Another cultural value that may impact levels of perceived coworker-, supervisor-, and organizational-social support is Uncertainty Avoidance. On the one hand, employees in low Uncertainty Avoidance cultures tend to take responsibility, make their own decisions, and do not rely on their supervisors for guidance (i.e., low supervisor social support) (Beehr & Glazer, 2001). On the other hand, individuals in high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures often “engage in strategies for seeking feedback from a variety of sources (superiors, peers, subordinates), either through

asking questions (inquiry) or observing (monitoring)” (House et al., 2004, p. 604) in order to reduce ambiguity (i.e., high supervisor social support). Shanock and Eisenberger (2006) found that subordinates who perceive organizational social support also perceive supervisor social support. It is expected that individuals from low Collectivistic and high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures (vs. high Collectivism and low Uncertainty Avoidance cultures) will likely solicit supervisor- and organizational-social support, whereas individuals in high Collectivistic and low Uncertainty Avoidance cultures (vs. low Collectivism and high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures) will seek support from coworkers, but not supervisor or organization.

*Hypothesis 2.* People in cultures low on In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism and high on Uncertainty Avoidance (e.g., Germanic Europe) will report (a) greater supervisor- and organizational-social support, but (b) lower coworker social support than people in cultures with high scores on In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism and middle to low scores on Uncertainty Avoidance (i.e., Confucian Asia). Participants in all other cultures will fall in between Germanic Europe and Confucian Asia.

#### *Relationship between Stressors and Attitudes across Cultures*

In general, research conducted across the globe shows a negative relationship between work-related stressors and favorable attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, affective commitment; Glazer & Beehr, 2005; Jamal, 2007; Mansell, Brough, &

Cole, 2006; Siu, 2002; Taris, Schreurs, & Van Iersel-Van Silfhout, 2001). However, the magnitude of this relationship differs (Glazer & Beehr; Liu et al., 2007). Liu et al. found, for example, that the relationship between job autonomy and job satisfaction is more positive for Chinese employees than for U.S. employees, and Americans who experience the same level of interpersonal constraints are more dissatisfied with their jobs than Chinese employees. Glazer and Beehr found that the relationship between role ambiguity and anxiety is stronger for nurses in Hungary than for nurses in Italy, whereas in Italy the relationship between role overload and anxiety is stronger than in Hungary. Furthermore, the role overload-anxiety, as well as anxiety-continuance commitment, and anxiety-intention to leave relationships are stronger for nurses in the United States than in Hungary. The third hypothesis, therefore, is as follows:

*Hypothesis 3.* Stressors will negatively relate to favorable attitudes regardless of culture. In other words, the direction, but not the magnitude, of the focal relationship will remain the same across all cultural regions.

#### *Relationship between Social Support and Attitudes across Cultures*

Social support has been studied as a direct predictor of job attitudes, as well as a moderator and a mediator of stressor-attitude relationships. Research (e.g., Beehr & Drexler, 1986; Beehr, Jex, Stacy, & Murray, 2000; Ducharme & Martin, 2000) on the direct effects model indicates that social support positively relates with job attitudes. Viswesvaran and colleagues' (1999) meta-analysis shows that social

support generally reduces the experience of strain. Dormann and Zapf's (1999) study among German citizens found that both supervisor- and coworker-social support negatively correlate with strains. Beehr et al. (2003) found that supervisor social support negatively correlates with psychological strain. Considering prior research, it is hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 4.* Each of (a) coworker social support, (b) supervisor social support, and (c) organizational social support will positively correlate with favorable attitudes in all cultural regions. In other words, across all cultures, as coworker social support, supervisor social support, or organizational social support increases, favorable attitudes will also increase.

*Moderating Effects of Social Support on Stressor-Attitude Relationship across Cultures*

As described by Glazer (2006), "interpretations of, perceptions of, and even receipt of social support is affected by culture" (p. 606); thus, differences in cultural values may influence the moderating effects of social support on the stressor–attitude relationship. While a number of studies (e.g., Beehr & Drexler, 1986; Beehr et al., 2000; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Ducharme & Martin, 2000; Jawahar et al., 2007) have looked at the moderating effects of social support, no studies thus far have considered how specific cultural values may influence the moderating effects of social support on the stressor–attitude relationship. Based on prior research, it may be that In-Group Collectivism impacts social support as a moderator of the stressor-

attitude relationship. As described above, studies conducted in the United States (a low In-Group Collectivistic culture) have typically found a buffering effect of social support (e.g., Bowling et al., 2004) and studies in which data were collected in China (a high In-Group Collectivistic culture) have generally shown a reverse buffering effect (e.g., Liang & Bogat, 1994). Therefore, this study focuses on In-Group Collectivism as a cultural value that may explain when social support moderates the stressor-attitude relationship.

*Influence of In-Group Collectivism.* Cultures low on In-Group Collectivism are also more Individualistic (Hofstede, 1980). In Individualistic cultures leaders focus more on task performance, whereas leaders in a Collectivistic cultures focus more on in-group maintenance. According to the GLOBE study, leaders in Individualistic cultures (or low In-Group Collectivistic cultures) who provide more task-oriented leadership guidance, focus on individual performance, while in a culture endorsing In-Group Collectivism, leaders are more concerned about in-group maintenance and group performance. Due to these different leadership styles, it may be that each source of social support (coworker, supervisor, and organization) has a different moderating effect.

In cultures endorsing In-Group Collectivism employees are more concerned over the group harmony and may perceive any social support from upper management as interfering or disturbing the group harmony; thus, social support may have a reverse buffering effect. The opposite may occur in low In-Group



Collectivistic cultures (i.e., Individualistic cultures) due to the task-oriented leadership style. In Individualistic cultures, where leaders provide task-oriented feedback, employees are likely to thrive on such feedback as it may help them achieve individual success. Thus, social support in such a culture would buffer the stressor-attitude relationship. Similar to supervisor social support, organizational social support may serve as a source of information for employees to effectively cope with work-related stressors in an Individualistic culture. As described in a study, on organizational support in the United States, conducted by Richardson, Yang, Vendenberg, DeJoy, and Wilson (2008), "...support may serve an informational purpose that helps employees functionally cope with stressors" (p. 794).

Coworker's social support is not expected to influence the relationship between stressors and favorable attitudes in low In-Group Collectivistic cultures. In low In-Group Collectivistic cultures coworker support may be less important to individuals as they are more focused on their individual success and may perceive their coworkers to be more of a competition than support. In high In-Group Collectivistic cultures it is more likely that coworkers rely on each other to cope with any role stressors; thus, it is likely that coworker social support will have a buffering effect on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship in cultures high on In-Group Collectivism. It is hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 5a.* Social support (organizational and supervisor) will moderate the relationship between role stressors and favorable attitudes in cultures with low In-Group Collectivism (i.e., Germanic Europe, USA and Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Anglo Europe, and Nordic Europe). In these cultures, the relationship between role stressors and favorable attitudes will be less negative for those with high social support than for those with low social support (i.e., buffering effect). In contrast, there will be a reverse buffering effect of social support on the stressor–attitude relationship in cultures with high In-Group Collectivism (i.e., Latin Europe, Latin America, Southern Asia, and Confucian Asia).

*Hypothesis 5b.* Coworker social support will have a buffering effect on the relationship between role stressors and favorable attitudes in cultures high on In-Group Collectivism (i.e., Latin Europe, Latin America, Southern Asia, and Confucian Asia).

### *Summary*

The goals of this study are (1) to compare mean scores on role stressors and social support across cultures, (2) to investigate the relationship between stressors, social support, and attitudes across cultures, and (3) to expand upon our understanding of the moderating effects of social support on the stressor-attitude relationship across cultures. It is expected that results will provide some explanation for equivocal findings linking social support with stressors and favorable attitudes.

## Method

### *Participants*

In 2007, the Human Resources (HR) division of a multinational HR consulting firm administered an online company-wide survey to all 1,994 employees across 25 countries in nine regions. Employees were instructed to take time out of their work day to complete the survey and were also reassured that their responses were confidential. The response rate was 90.1%, or 1,796 responses.

About one-third of the respondents were from Europe. Of these, 17% were from *Anglo Europe* (UK [ $n = 306$ ]), 8.4% from *Latin Europe*, including France ( $n = 133$ ) and Italy ( $n = 17$ ), 5.5% from *Nordic Europe*, including Denmark ( $n = 24$ ), Sweden ( $n = 37$ ), and Norway ( $n = 37$ ), and 6.7% from *Germanic Europe*, including Belgium and Luxemburg ( $n = 26$ ), Germany ( $n = 17$ ), Netherlands ( $n = 67$ ), and Switzerland ( $n = 11$ ). *Latin Americans* (i.e., Brazilians,  $n = 58$ ) represented 3.2% of respondents. About 20% of respondents were from *Asia*. *Southern Asians* (from India and Sri Lanka [ $n = 62$ ] and Malaysia and Singapore [ $n = 15$ ]) represented 4.3% of respondents. Just above 11% (11.1%) of respondents were from *Confucian Asia*, including China ( $n = 41$ ), Hong Kong and Taiwan ( $n = 16$ ), Japan ( $n = 121$ ), and Korea ( $n = 22$ ). *Australia and New Zealand* represented 4.8%, with 68 respondents from Australia and 18 from New Zealand. Finally, *USA and Canada* represented 39% of respondents with  $n = 632$  and  $n = 68$ , respectively.

The demographics of the sample are presented in Table 3, both regionally and panculturally. Of the respondents, 2% occupy Global Corporate Leadership or General Manager positions, 11.3% are Regional and Hub Leaders (e.g., Practice Leaders), and 38.8% are Professional Staff such as Project Coordinators, and Administrative Staff. Respondents' tenure in the organization was: less than six months ( $n = 144$ ), between six months and one year ( $n = 163$ ), between one and three years ( $n = 461$ ), and between three and five years ( $n = 251$ ). To keep data confidential, six age brackets were provided to participants: 18 – 24 years ( $n = 70$ ), 25 – 35 years ( $n = 451$ ), 36 – 40 years ( $n = 278$ ), 41 – 49 years ( $n = 399$ ), 50 – 64 years ( $n = 567$ ), and 65+ years ( $n = 27$ ). Finally, 64.9% of respondents were female. Considering these demographics, a typical employee at this professional organization is a female consultant between 50 – 64 years of age who has been with the organization for over five years. It is noteworthy that the majority of employees in Southern Asia, Latin America, Australia and New Zealand, and Anglo Europe are between 25 – 35 years of age, reflecting a younger workforce than the rest of the cultural regions. Consequently, the majority of Southern Asians have been with the company for 1 – 3 years. Finally, different from the other cultural regions, the majority of employees in USA and Canada, Latin America, and Anglo Europe were professional staff (43.8%, 51.0%, and 55.6%, respectively).

Table 3

*Job Level, Tenure, Age, and Sex (%) by Region*

Job Level	US/CAN	LE	NE	GE	LA	SA	CA	AUS/NZ	AE	Total
Global	3.1			1.7	7.0	2.6	1.5	1.2	0.7	2.0
Regional	11.6	13.3	14.3	10.9		14.3	11.0	7.0	11.8	11.3
Consultant	41.5	<b>60.0<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>66.3</b>	<b>54.6</b>	42.1	<b>55.8</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>51.2</b>	32.0	<b>47.8</b>
Professional Staff <sup>b</sup>	<b>43.8</b>	26.7	19.4	32.8	<b>51.0</b>	27.3	18.5	34.7	<b>55.6</b>	38.8
Tenure										
< 6 mos	7.2	2.7	8.2	7.5	17.2	24.7	7.0	12.8	6.2	8.0
6 mos – 1 year	10.0	6.7	12.2	7.5	8.6	11.7	9.5	10.5	6.5	9.1
1 – 3 years	20.6	22.0	22.4	17.5	29.3	<b>44.2</b>	26.5	30.2	36.3	25.7
3 – 5 years	11.5	22.0	18.4	16.7	12.1	11.7	18.0	12.8	12.1	14.0
> 5 years	<b>50.7</b>	<b>46.7</b>	<b>38.8</b>	<b>50.8</b>	<b>32.8</b>	7.8	<b>39.0</b>	<b>33.7</b>	<b>38.9</b>	<b>43.2</b>
Age Bracket										
18-24	2.3	1.3	1.0	1.7	15.5	26.0		8.1	4.2	3.9
25-35	22.7	22.7	11.2	22.3	<b>34.5</b>	<b>49.4</b>	21.0	<b>33.7</b>	<b>30.1</b>	25.2
36-40	11.2	20.7	19.4	27.3	10.3	9.1	23.0	14.0	15.0	15.5
41-49	21.1	<b>34.0</b>	<b>34.7</b>	19.8	20.7	7.8	20.5	19.8	21.9	22.3
50-64	<b>39.8</b>	21.3	32.7	<b>28.1</b>	17.2	7.8	<b>34.5</b>	23.3	28.4	<b>31.6</b>
65+	2.9		1.0	0.8	1.7		1.0	1.2	0.3	1.5
Sex										
Female	<b>70.2</b>	<b>67.3</b>	<b>53.6</b>	<b>54.2</b>	<b>70.7</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>64.5</b>	25.6	<b>72.1</b>	<b>64.9</b>
Male	29.8	32.7	46.4	45.8	29.3	43.4	35.5	<b>74.4</b>	27.9	35.1

Note. US/CAN = United States and Canada, LE = Latin Europe, NE = Nordic Europe, GE = Germanic Europe, LA = Latin America, SA = Southern Asia, CA = Confucian Asia, AUS/NZ = Australia and New Zealand, AE = Anglo Europe.  
<sup>a</sup> Majority in bold font. <sup>b</sup> An example of professional staff is an Administrator.

### *Procedure*

This study utilized archival data that were originally collected via an organization-wide survey in a multinational HR consulting firm (see Appendices B and C). Most respondents received the survey in English. In countries where translations were needed, employees assigned to the role of project coordinators managed the translations of the survey either by translating the survey themselves or using other internal resources. Due to resource limitations, surveys were not back-translated from the native language to English. The survey was translated into French, Italian, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Dutch, Flemish, German, Spanish, simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. Participants in these countries received the survey in the native language of the country.

### *Measures*

In addition to the demographic questions, the original survey contained a total of 84 items. Originally, these 84 items were categorized into the following themes: Leadership (My manager, Sr. Management, and Global leadership), Communications, Recognition & Rewards, Learning & Development, Culture (values and brand), Service Excellence, Work Environment, and Employee Engagement. Items were rated on a five-point Likert-type scale with 1 indicating “strongly agree” and 5 indicating “strongly disagree.” An additional option of “no opinion” was provided. Social support and favorable attitudes items were reverse

coded so that higher values indicate greater social support and greater favorable attitudes.

Considering that this study focused on role stressors, favorable attitudes, and social support, factor analyses were employed both panculturally (see Table 4) and within region (see Appendix D) to determine which items should be included in each of the main study variables (i.e., role stressors, favorable attitudes, and social support). After reviewing survey items, 25 face-valid items were selected to reflect role stressors, favorable attitudes, and social support. Three separate factor analyses were conducted with varimax rotation. Items with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and loadings at or above .45 were selected to represent the different variables. The .45 cut off for factor loadings was determined after carefully reviewing factor loadings across cultures. According to Tinsley and Tinsley (1987), the first factor in a factor analysis commonly receives high loadings for more variables than the later factors and in such cases "...the factor can be interpreted in terms of its most salient loadings" (p. 422). For role stressors, one factor emerged reflecting an index of role stressors – role ambiguity, role overload, and inadequate resources. For social support three factors emerged reflecting – coworker social support, supervisor social support, and organizational social support. Finally, for favorable attitudes one factor emerged reflecting an index of employee satisfaction, employee commitment, and pride (see Table 4). The main study variables are discussed in detail below.

Table 4

*Factor Loadings Using Principal Components Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation (n = 1,796)*

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.72				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.71				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.68				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.76				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.79				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.83			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.81			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.79			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.79			
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.82		
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.			0.84		
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.78		



Table 4 (Continued)

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager coaches and mentors my development.			0.79		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.84		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.78		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.80	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.				0.79	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.				0.71	
Overall I am satisfied with my present job.					0.73
I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.					0.79
I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.					0.80
I am proud of the work I do.					0.76
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.82
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.75
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.87

*Role stressors.* Five items loaded on one factor corresponding to the concept of role stressors and accounted for 53.9 % of the common variance. The items reflect role ambiguity (e.g., ‘I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work’), role overload (e.g., ‘The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable’), and inadequate resources (e.g., ‘I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well’). Factor loadings ranged from .63 in Germanic Europe to .87 in Southern Asia. Alpha reliability ranged from .67 in Latin Europe to .82 in Latin America and South Asia (see Table 5). A higher average score on the index indicates a higher level of perceived stressors.

*Organizational social support.* Four organizational social support items loaded on one factor explaining 23.8% of the common variance. Loadings on this factor ranged from .79 to .83 with the highest loading represented by “Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best” and the lowest item by “Senior Management is approachable and engaging.” Factor loadings ranged from .48 in Nordic Europe to .90 in Australia and New Zealand. Reliability ranged from .83 in Germanic Europe to .91 in USA and Canada, Nordic Europe, and Anglo Europe (see Table 5). Because scores were reversed, higher scores indicated greater support (for this and all support measures).

*Supervisor social support.* Supervisor social support is represented by six items accounting for 33.4% of the common variance. The items with the highest loading of .84, was “My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my

Table 5

*Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations between Role Stressors, Social Support Sources, and Favorable Attitudes*

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
<i>All Countries (n = 1796)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.47	0.80	<b>0.78</b>				
2. Organizational Support	3.44	0.87	- 0.55	<b>0.90</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	3.79	0.93	- 0.52	0.53	<b>0.93</b>		
4. Coworker Support	3.80	0.75	- 0.54	0.61	0.48	<b>0.80</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	4.21	0.68	- 0.58	0.61	0.50	0.54	<b>0.89</b>
<i>USA and Canada (n = 700)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.44	0.85	<b>0.81</b>				
2. Organizational Support	3.57	1.01	- 0.60	<b>0.91</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	3.89	0.97	- 0.54	0.57	<b>0.93</b>		
4. Coworker Support	3.90	0.83	- 0.57	0.67	0.50	<b>0.82</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	4.33	0.66	- 0.61	0.64	0.54	0.57	<b>0.88</b>
<i>Latin Europe (n = 150)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.78	0.68	<b>0.67</b>				
2. Organizational Support	3.13	0.95	- 0.43	<b>0.86</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	3.24	1.02	- 0.35	0.34	<b>0.92</b>		
4. Coworker Support	3.40	0.78	- 0.35	0.56	0.28	<b>0.70</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	3.89	0.67	- 0.48	0.58	0.25	0.49	<b>0.87</b>
<i>Nordic Europe (n = 98)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.73	0.97	<b>0.80</b>				
2. Organizational Support	3.24	1.16	- 0.48	<b>0.91</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	3.50	1.19	- 0.56	0.67	<b>0.94</b>		
4. Coworker Support	3.61	0.89	- 0.58	0.59	0.60	<b>0.66</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	4.22	0.76	- 0.55	0.58	0.64	0.59	<b>0.88</b>

Table 5 (Continued)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Germanic Europe (n = 121)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.60	0.66	<b>0.70</b>				
2. Organizational Support	3.69	0.76	- 0.48	<b>0.83</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	3.54	0.89	- 0.51	0.57	<b>0.88</b>		
4. Coworker Support	3.54	0.68	- 0.45	0.35	0.48	<b>0.71</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	4.13	0.57	- 0.34	0.58	0.47	0.48	<b>0.86</b>
<i>Latin America (n = 58)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.18	0.80	<b>0.82</b>				
2. Organizational Support	4.11	0.75	- 0.58	<b>0.88</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	4.01	0.88	- 0.62	0.68	<b>0.92</b>		
4. Coworker Support	3.91	0.71	- 0.68	0.53	0.59	<b>0.86</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	4.53	0.56	- 0.67	0.51	0.59	0.42	<b>0.93</b>
<i>Southern Asia (n = 77)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.54	0.86	<b>0.82</b>				
2. Organizational Support	3.88	0.80	- 0.53	<b>0.85</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	3.88	0.87	- 0.52	0.52	<b>0.91</b>		
4. Coworker Support	4.03	0.77	- 0.32	0.55	0.50	<b>0.81</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	4.30	0.61	- 0.60	0.64	0.46	0.33	<b>0.88</b>
<i>Confucian Asia (n = 200)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.54	0.74	<b>0.78</b>				
2. Organizational Support	3.18	0.90	- 0.63	<b>0.90</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	3.29	0.99	- 0.60	0.58	<b>0.93</b>		
4. Coworker Support	3.42	0.92	- 0.67	0.62	0.56	<b>0.86</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	3.98	0.64	- 0.66	0.57	0.49	0.63	<b>0.89</b>
<i>Australia and New Zealand (n = 86)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.17	0.58	<b>0.69</b>				
2. Organizational Support	3.83	0.77	- 0.52	<b>0.88</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	3.87	0.89	- 0.41	0.36	<b>0.92</b>		
4. Coworker Support	4.09	0.56	- 0.48	0.63	0.32	<b>0.71</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	4.29	0.60	- 0.49	0.48	0.36	0.54	<b>0.90</b>

Table 5 (Continued)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Anglo Europe (n = 306)</i>							
1. Role Stressors	2.33	0.71	<b>0.75</b>				
2. Organizational Support	3.44	0.98	- 0.53	<b>0.91</b>			
3. Supervisor Support	3.65	0.93	- 0.53	0.53	<b>0.91</b>		
4. Coworker Support	3.66	0.78	- 0.55	0.61	0.47	<b>0.77</b>	
5. Favorable Attitudes	4.16	0.71	- 0.59	0.63	0.51	0.49	<b>0.89</b>

*Note.* All correlations are significant at  $p < .01$ .

performance” and “My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.” The lowest loading items (.78) were represented by “My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis” and “My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.” Factor loadings ranged from .49 in Latin America to .89 in Australia and New Zealand. Reliability ranged from .88 in Germanic Europe to .94 in Nordic Europe (see Table 5).

*Coworker social support.* Three items were used to account for coworker social support and the factor accounted for 17% of the common variance. The highest loading item, at .80, was “People at this organization are approachable and engaging” and the lowest loading item, at .71, was “Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.” Factor loadings ranged from .36 in Nordic Europe to .93 in Latin America. Chronbach alpha ranged from .66 in Nordic Europe to .86 in Latin America and Confucian Asia (see Table 5).

*Favorable attitudes.* Seven items loaded on one factor representing an index of favorable attitudes – employee commitment, employee satisfaction, and employee pride. This measure accounted for 62.3% of the common variance in the factor. Items in this measure represent employee commitment (“I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed”), employee satisfaction (“Overall I am satisfied with my present job”), and employee pride (“I am proud to work for the organization”). Factor loadings ranged from .63 in Germanic Europe to .95 in Latin America. Reliability for this scale ranged from .86 in Germanic Europe to .93 in Latin America (see Table 5). A higher score indicates a more favorable attitude.

#### *Statistical Analyses*

In order to determine the correlation between stressors and favorable attitudes across cultures, Pearson correlations were performed pan-culturally and within each cultural region. Regions were controlled for in pan-cultural correlation analysis by creating dummy codes ( $k - 1$ , where  $k$  is the number of the cultural regions). For correlation analysis within regions, job levels were controlled for by creating dummy codes ( $k - 1$ , where  $k$  is the number of job levels). Due to small sample sizes and blank cells, two job levels were created and controlled for. ANOVA with Bonferroni *post hoc* analyses were performed to determine how people across the regions differed in their level of role stressors, favorable attitudes, and social support. Furthermore, ANCOVA (using job levels as a covariate) was performed to determine if employees across the regions differed on the main study

variables (i.e., role stressors, favorable attitudes, coworker social support, supervisor social support, and organizational social support). Finally, moderated hierarchical regression analyses were performed to investigate each of the moderator effects of coworker-, supervisor-, and organizational-social support on the stressor-attitude relationship within each of the nine cultural regions.

## Results

### *Level of Role Stressors across Cultures*

An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was performed to test Hypothesis 1, which stated that individuals in cultures high on Power Distance and low on Uncertainty Avoidance (e.g., Latin America), would report lower levels of role stressors than those in low Power Distance and high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures (e.g., Nordic Europe). Participants in all other regions would fall in between Latin America and Nordic Europe. The ANCOVA analysis compares the mean scores on role stressors across regions while controlling for (dummy coded) job level. After taking job level into account, the adjusted means differed from the observed means confirming that job level is a covariate. Table 6 reports both adjusted and observed means. Results of the ANCOVA are presented in Table 6 and shows that mean scores on role stressors differed significantly across cultures  $F(8, 1774) = 8.61$ ,

Table 6

*Analysis of Variance of Role Stressors, Supervisor Support, Organizational Support, Coworker Support, and Favorable Attitudes across Nine Cultural Regions*

Regions	<i>n</i>	Role Stressors	Supervisor Support	Organizational Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
USA and Canada	685	2.44 (0.86) <sup>ae</sup> <b>2.45</b>	3.89 (0.97) <sup>abcde</sup> <b>3.87</b>	3.57 (1.01) <sup>abc</sup> <b>3.56</b>	3.90 (0.83) <sup>abcde</sup> <b>3.89</b>	4.33 (0.66) <sup>abc</sup> <b>4.33</b>
Latin Europe	149	2.78 (0.68) <sup>abcd</sup> <b>2.76</b>	3.24 (1.02) <sup>afhij</sup> <b>3.26</b>	3.13 (0.95) <sup>adefgh</sup> <b>3.15</b>	3.40 (0.78) <sup>afgh</sup> <b>3.42</b>	3.89 (0.67) <sup>adefgh</sup> <b>3.89</b>
Nordic Europe	82	2.76 (1.01) <sup>efgh</sup> <b>2.73</b>	3.54 (1.19) <sup>b</sup> <b>3.58</b>	3.25 (1.16) <sup>ijkl</sup> <b>3.28</b>	3.66 (0.91) <sup>bij</sup> <b>3.69</b>	4.21 (0.79) <sup>d</sup> <b>4.21</b>
Germanic Europe	115	2.60 (0.66) <sup>ij</sup> <b>2.58</b>	3.55 (0.88) <sup>c</sup> <b>3.57</b>	3.69 (0.76) <sup>sdl</sup> <b>3.70</b>	3.54 (0.69) <sup>ckl</sup> <b>3.54</b>	4.13 (0.57) <sup>i</sup> <b>4.13</b>
Latin America	57	2.19 (0.80) <sup>bfi</sup> <b>2.20</b>	4.00 (0.88) <sup>fg</sup> <b>3.99</b>	4.11 (0.75) <sup>beimn</sup> <b>4.11</b>	3.91 (0.71) <sup>fm</sup> <b>3.90</b>	4.52 (0.57) <sup>eijk</sup> <b>4.54</b>
Southern Asia	77	2.54 (0.86) <b>2.52</b>	3.88 (0.87) <sup>hi</sup> <b>3.89</b>	3.88 (0.80) <sup>hop</sup> <b>3.89</b>	4.03 (0.77) <sup>gikno</sup> <b>4.04</b>	4.30 (0.61) <sup>il</sup> <b>4.29</b>
Confucian Asia	192	2.53 (0.72) <sup>k</sup> <b>2.46</b>	3.30 (0.98) <sup>degikm</sup> <b>3.34</b>	3.18 (0.90) <sup>esmoq</sup> <b>3.22</b>	3.44 (0.91) <sup>dnnpq</sup> <b>3.47</b>	3.98 (0.64) <sup>bjlm</sup> <b>3.99</b>
Australia and New Zealand	82	2.17 (0.58) <sup>cgik</sup> <b>2.17</b>	3.87 (0.90) <sup>jk</sup> <b>3.88</b>	3.84 (0.77) <sup>gkqr</sup> <b>3.86</b>	4.09 (0.56) <sup>hijpr</sup> <b>4.10</b>	4.29 (0.60) <sup>gm</sup> <b>4.30</b>
Anglo Europe	298	2.33 (0.71) <sup>dh</sup> <b>2.36</b>	3.64 (0.93) <sup>elm</sup> <b>3.61</b>	3.45 (0.98) <sup>nphr</sup> <b>3.43</b>	3.66 (0.78) <sup>eoqr</sup> <b>3.64</b>	4.16 (0.71) <sup>chk</sup> <b>4.17</b>
<i>F</i>		8.61 <sup>**</sup>	14.23 <sup>**</sup>	13.31 <sup>**</sup>	15.79 <sup>**</sup>	12.61 <sup>**</sup>

*Note.* Regions sharing a superscript under the same variable significantly differ from one another. Adjusted mean scores are in bold.  
<sup>\*\*</sup>*p* < .01.



$p < .01$ ). Consistent with Hypothesis 1, Latin Americans had a significantly lower mean score on role stressors than Nordic Europeans ( $M = 2.19$ ,  $SD = .80$  vs.  $M = 2.76$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ,  $p < .01$ , respectively). Australians and New Zealanders had the lowest mean for role stressors ( $M = 2.17$ ,  $SD = .58$ ) and it was significantly lower than Latin Europeans ( $M = 2.78$ ,  $SD = .68$ ), Nordic Europeans, Germanic Europeans ( $M = 2.60$ ,  $SD = .66$ ), and Confucian Asians ( $M = 2.53$ ,  $SD = .72$ ). The highest mean on role stressors was reported by Latin Europeans and it was significantly higher than in USA and Canada ( $M = 2.44$ ,  $SD = .86$ ), Latin America ( $M = 2.19$ ,  $SD = .80$ ), Australia and New Zealand, and Anglo Europe ( $M = 2.33$ ,  $SD = .71$ ). Results showed that participants in Australia and New Zealand, and Latin America reported the lowest level of role stressors, whereas those in Latin and Nordic Europe reported the highest level of role stressors. Hypothesis 1 was only partially supported.

#### *Level of Social Support across Cultures*

ANCOVA was performed to test Hypotheses 2. Hypothesis 2 stated that people in cultures low on In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism and high on Uncertainty Avoidance (e.g., Germanic Europe) would report (a) greater supervisor- and organizational-social support, but (b) lower coworker social support than people in cultures with high scores on In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism and middle to low scores on Uncertainty Avoidance (i.e., Confucian Asia). Participants in all other cultures would fall in between Germanic Europe and

Confucian Asia. Again, job level was controlled for in this analysis. Table 6 reports both adjusted and observed means. Results show that cultural groups differed significantly on supervisor social support ( $F(8, 1772) = 14.23, p < .01$ ) and organizational social support ( $F(8, 1740) = 13.31, p < .01$ ).

Inconsistent with hypothesis 2, Germanic Europeans had higher mean score on supervisor social support than Confucian Asians, however, the difference was not significant ( $M = 3.55, SD = .88$  vs.  $M = 3.30, SD = .98$ , respectively). Employees in Latin America ( $M = 4.00, SD = .88$ ) reported the greatest amount of supervisor social support and their levels were significantly greater than Latin Europeans ( $M = 3.24, SD = 1.02$ ) and Confucian Asians. Latin Europeans had the lowest mean score on supervisor social support and it was significantly lower than for Americans and Canadians ( $M = 3.89, SD = .97$ ), Latin Americans, Southern Asians ( $M = 3.88, SD = .87$ ), Australians and New Zealanders ( $M = 3.87, SD = .90$ ), and Anglo Europeans ( $M = 3.64, SD = .93$ ). Results show that those in Latin America, USA and Canada, Southern Asia, and Australia and New Zealand reported higher levels of supervisor support, and those in Latin Europe and Confucian Asia reported lower levels of supervisor support.

In terms of organizational support, after controlling for job level, Germanic Europeans had a significantly higher mean score on organizational social support than Confucian Asians ( $M = 3.69, SD = .76$  vs.  $M = 3.18, SD = .90, p < .01$  respectively). Latin Americans reported the greatest amount of organizational

support ( $M = 4.11$ ,  $SD = .75$ ) and it was significantly greater than for people in USA and Canada ( $M = 3.57$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ), Latin Europe ( $M = 3.13$ ,  $SD = .95$ ), Nordic Europe ( $M = 3.25$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ), Confucian Asia ( $M = 3.18$ ,  $SD = .90$ ), and Anglo Europe ( $M = 3.45$ ,  $SD = .98$ ). Latin Europeans reported the lowest mean score on organizational support and it was significantly lower than for people in USA and Canada, Germanic Europe ( $M = 3.69$ ,  $SD = .76$ ), Latin America, Southern Asia ( $M = 3.88$ ,  $SD = .80$ ), Australia and New Zealand ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = .77$ ), and Anglo Europe. Those in Latin America, Southern Asia, and Australia and New Zealand reported greater levels of organizational support and those in Confucian Asia and Nordic Europe reported lower levels of organizational support. Hypothesis 2a was only partially supported.

In terms of coworker social support, it was hypothesized that people in cultures with high scores on In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism and middle to low on Uncertainty Avoidance (i.e., Confucian Asia) would score higher on coworker social support than people in cultures low on In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism and high on Uncertainty Avoidance (i.e., Germanic Europe). Table 6 reports both adjusted and observed means. Results show that cultural groups differed significantly on coworker social support ( $F(8, 1765) = 15.79$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Inconsistent with the hypothesis, participants in Confucian Asia perceived low coworker social support and it was not significantly

lower than for Germanic Europeans ( $M = 3.44$ ,  $SD = .91$  vs.  $M = 3.54$ ,  $SD = .69$ , respectively). Moreover, employees in Australia and New Zealand ( $M = 4.09$ ,  $SD = .56$ ) reported the greatest amount of coworker social support and it was significantly greater than for Latin Europeans ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = .78$ ), Nordic Europeans ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = .91$ ), Germanic Europeans, Confucian Asians, and Anglo Europeans ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = .78$ ). Latin Europeans had the lowest mean score on coworker social support and it was significantly lower than for employees in USA and Canada ( $M = 3.90$ ,  $SD = .83$ ), Latin America ( $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = .71$ ), Southern Asia ( $M = 4.03$ ,  $SD = .77$ ), and Australia and New Zealand. Results show that those in Australia and New Zealand, Southern Asia, and Latin America reported greater levels of coworker support, and those in Latin Europe and Confucian Asia reported lower levels of coworker support. These results show that Hypothesis 2b was not supported.

#### *Relationship between Stressors, Social Support, and Attitudes across Cultures*

Hypothesis 3 stated that stressors would negatively relate to favorable attitudes regardless of culture. In other words, it was expected that the direction, but not the magnitude, of the focal relationship would remain the same across all cultural regions. Hypothesis 4 expected that each of (a) coworker social support, (b) supervisor social support, and (c) organizational social support would positively correlate with favorable attitudes in all cultural regions. These hypotheses were supported (see Table 5).

Pan-cultural partial correlation and within region correlations, controlling for (dummy coded) region, shows that variables significantly correlated as expected both pan-culturally and within regions. Role stressors and favorable attitudes correlated negatively ( $p < .01$ ) both pan-culturally ( $r = -.58$ ) and within regions (ranging from  $r = -.34$  in Germanic Europe to  $r = -.67$  in Latin America). Correlations between coworker social support and favorable attitudes were also significant ( $p < .01$ ) pan-culturally ( $r = .54$ ) and within regions (ranging from  $r = .33$  in Southern Asia to  $r = .63$  in Confucian Asia). Correlations between supervisor social support and favorable attitudes were also significant ( $p < .01$ ) both pan-culturally ( $r = .50, p < .01$ ) and within regions (ranging from  $r = .25$  in Latin Europe to  $r = .64$  in Nordic Europe). Organizational social support positively correlated ( $p < .01$ ) with favorable attitudes pan-culturally ( $r = .61$ ) and within regions (ranging from  $r = .48$  in Australia and New Zealand to  $r = .64$  in USA and Canada and Southern Asia).

#### *Moderating Effects of Social Support across Cultures*

Hypothesis 5a stated that social support from the organization and supervisor would moderate the relationship between role stressors and favorable attitudes in cultures with low In-Group Collectivism (i.e., Germanic Europe, USA and Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Anglo Europe, and Nordic Europe). In these cultures, the relationship between role stressors and favorable attitudes would be less negative for those with high social support than for those with low social support

(i.e., buffering effect). In contrast, there would be a reverse buffering effect of social support on the stressor–attitude relationship in cultures with high In-Group Collectivism (i.e., Latin Europe, Latin America, Southern Asia, and Confucian Asia). Hypothesis 5b addressed coworker social support stating that there would be a buffering effect of coworker social support on the stressor–attitude relationship in cultures high on In-Group Collectivism (i.e., Latin Europe, Latin America, Southern Asia, and Confucian Asia). To test these hypotheses a moderated multiple regression analysis was performed. This analysis included three steps. In the first step the dummy coded variables for job level were entered, role stressors and the focal social support variables were entered in the second step, and in step three the interaction term between role stressors and the focal social support variable was entered. Results of analyses with significant interaction effects are presented in Table 7.

For Germanic Europe, organizational support and supervisor support each significantly interacted with role stressors to account for significant variance in favorable attitudes. After entering job level, which accounted for a nonsignificant 4% of variance on favorable attitudes. Role stressors and organizational support, entered in step two, explained an additional 32% ( $p < .01$ , one-tail) of the variance in favorable attitudes, and the interaction term entered in step three explained 9% ( $p < .01$ ) more variance in favorable attitudes. Likewise, role stressors and supervisor support accounted for 22% ( $p < .01$ , one-tail) of additional variance in

Table 7

*Interactions between Social Support and Role Stressors on Favorable Attitudes  
Controlling for Job Level*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>	$\Delta R^2$
<i>Germanic Europe - Organizational Social Support</i>				
Step 1: Job Level				
Consultant	-.20	.12	-.17	.04
Professional Staff	-.21	.13	-.17	
Step 2:				
Role Stressors	.83	.23	.96**	.32**
Organizational Support	1.10	.18	1.47**	
Step 3:				
Role Stressors x Organizational Support	-.25	.06	-1.06**	.09**
<i>Germanic Europe – Supervisor Social Support</i>				
Step 1: Job Level				
Consultant	-.18	.14	-.16	.04
Professional Staff	-.29	.15	-.24	
Step 2:				
Role Stressors	.35	.24	.41	.22**
Supervisor Support	.61	.19	.96**	
Step 3:				
Role Stressors x Supervisor Support	-.13	.06	-.59*	.03*

Table 7 (Continued)

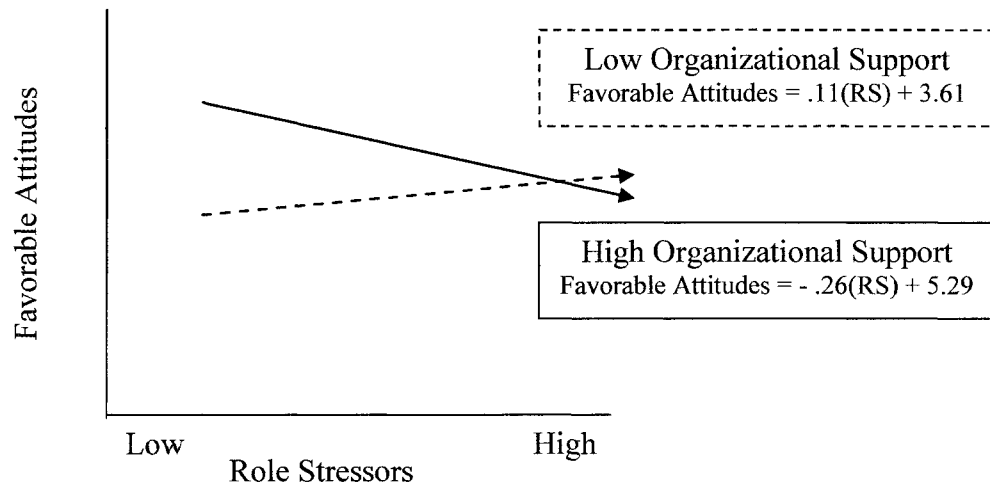
Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>B</i>	$\Delta R^2$
<i>USA and Canada - Organizational Social Support</i>				
Step 1: Job Level				
Consultant	-.01	.05	-.01	.01*
Professional Staff	-.15	.05	-.12**	
Step 2:				
Role Stressors	-.43	.07	-.56**	.49**
Organizational Support	.17	.06	.26**	
Step 3:				
Role Stressors x Organizational Support	.04	.02	.17*	.01*
<i>Latin Europe – Supervisor Social Support</i>				
Step 1: Job Level				
Consultant	-.09	.14	-.06	.05*
Professional Staff	-.42	.16	-.28**	
Step 2:				
Role Stressors	.06	.25	.06	.24**
Supervisor Support	.49	.21	.76**	
Step 3:				
Role Stressors x Supervisor Support	-.14	.07	-.67*	.02*

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$ .

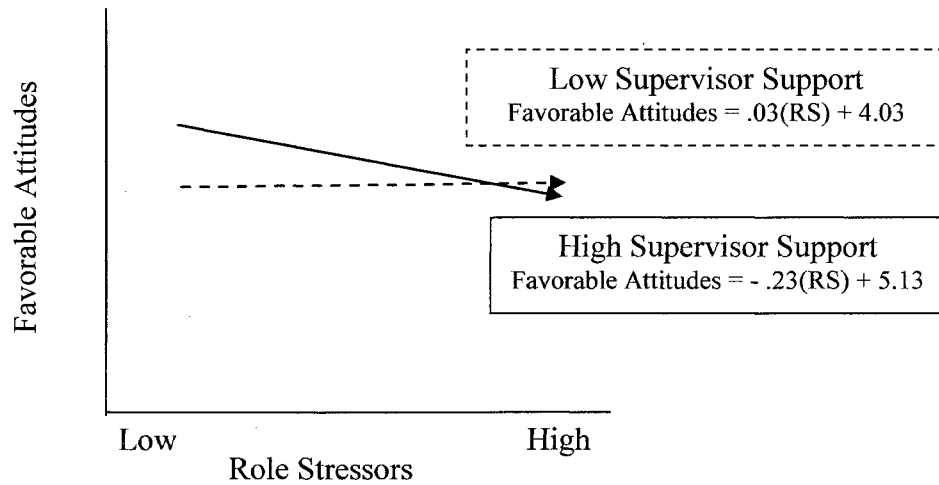
favorable attitude after job level. The interaction term entered in step three explained 3% ( $p < .05$ ) more variance in favorable attitudes. In order to visualize the results, the interaction between role stressors and supervisor support was plotted (1 SD below and above the mean) against favorable attitudes. Figures 4a and 4b



a. Organizational Social Support



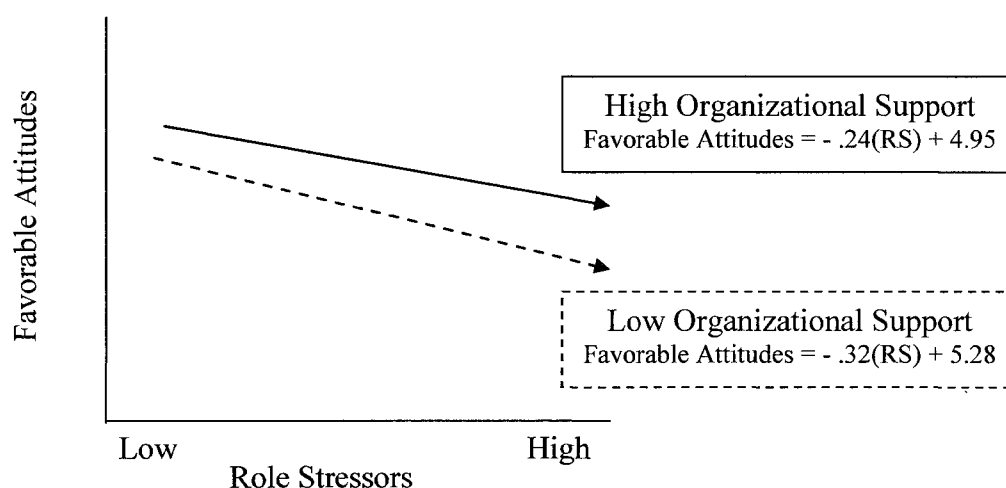
b. Supervisor Social Support



*Figure 4.* Moderating effect of organizational- and supervisor-social support on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship in Germanic Europe.

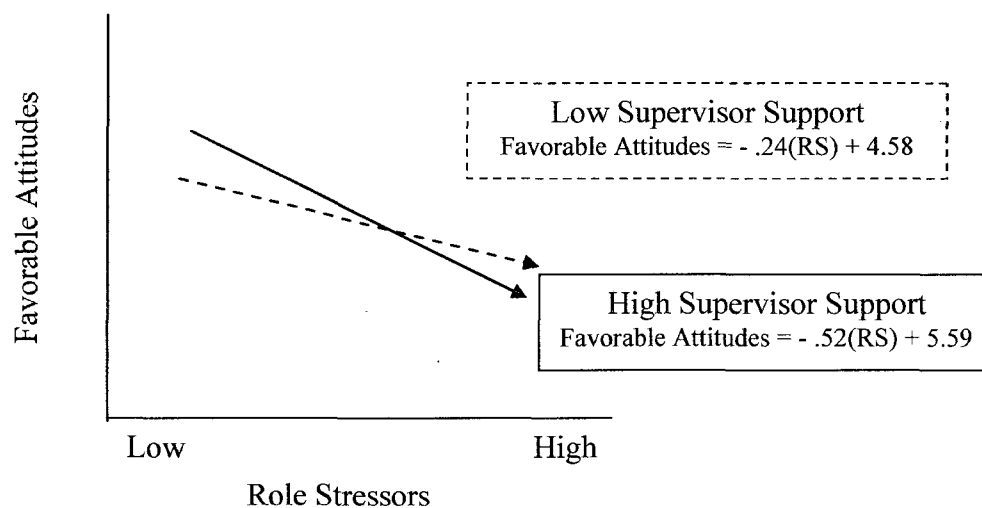
illustrate results for organizational- and supervisor-social support. As role stressors increased favorable attitudes decreased for those with high organizational support and also for those with high supervisor support. This contradicts the hypothesis.

In USA and Canada, the control variables explained 1% ( $p < .05$ ) of variance in favorable attitudes. Role stressors and organizational support explained an additional 49% ( $p < .01$ ) of the variance in favorable attitudes. The interaction term added a significant 1% ( $p < .05$ ) of variance in favorable attitudes. Using the same procedures to plot the results as described above, Figure 5 shows that in USA and Canada, as role stressors increased, favorable attitudes decreased for those with high and low supervisor support. However, for those with low organizational support the slope was slightly stronger. These results support the buffering hypothesis.



*Figure 5.* Moderating effect of organizational social support on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship in USA and Canada.

In Latin Europe, the control variables explained 5% ( $p < .05$ ) of the variance in favorable attitudes. Role stressors and supervisor support, entered in step two, explained an additional 24% ( $p < .01$ , one-tail) of the variance in favorable attitudes. The interaction term entered in step three explained a significant 2% ( $p < .05$ ) more variance in favorable attitudes. Using the same procedure as above to plot the interaction, Figure 6 shows that in Latin Europe, as role stressors increased favorable attitudes decreased more so for those with high supervisor social support than for those with low supervisor social support. Furthermore, at high levels of role stressors and low supervisor support, favorable attitudes were greater than when stressors and supervisor support were high. Results show, as hypothesized, a reverse buffering effect.



*Figure 6.* Moderating effect of supervisor social support on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship in Latin Europe.

## Discussion

The present cross-cultural study sought (1) to develop a better understanding of cultural differences in mean scores of role stressors and perceived coworker-, supervisor-, and organizational-social support, (2) to investigate the relationship between role stressor and favorable attitudes, as well as social support and favorable attitudes, and (3) to expand our understanding of the moderating effects of social support on stressor-favorable attitude relationships across cultures. It was expected that low In-Group Collectivism would serve as a cultural explanation for when various sources of social support would moderate the stressor-strain relationship. Results indicate that this was not necessarily the case and other cultural explanations are embedded in the discussion below. Consistent with Beehr and Glazer (2001) and Glazer (2006), the present study found that individuals' mean scores on role stressors, perceived coworker social support, supervisor social support, and organizational social support differ significantly across cultural regions.

### *Level of Role Stressors across Cultures*

Schwartz's cultural value Autonomy (see Table 2) may relate to role stressors. Latin Europe, Nordic Europe, and Germanic Europe all score high on Autonomy (Schwartz, 1999) and, in the present study, people in these countries had the highest mean scores for role stressors. (Note that according to the GLOBE classification framework, there is no dimension on which these three cultural regions are similar, see Figure 1). In cultures endorsing Intellectual Autonomy, employees

independently pursue their own ideas and intellectual direction (Schwartz) to complete their tasks. While some employees may thrive on the ability to use their creativity, curiosity, and broadmindedness to complete their tasks it also reflects an achievement orientation which can be stress-provoking; and even more so, when achievement orientation is combined with role stressors, such as limited resources, unclear expectations, and role overload, hindering their ability to be successful. In fact, Singh (1998) found that Autonomy increase role ambiguity among sales people in the United States (an autonomous culture; Schwartz).

Alternatively, it may be that Latin Europeans and Nordic Europeans perceive more role stressors than Anglos because in the former cultures employees “work to live” rather than “live to work” (Wittenkamp & Glazer, 2007). With a “work to live” mentality, longer work hours may have a more deteriorating effect on employees’ work attitudes as they likely value spending time outside of work more than in a culture where employees have a “live to work” attitude. In addition, in a culture with a “live to work” attitude it is likely that management set the expectations that employees will work long hours while management in a “work to live” culture do not expect employees to work long hours. In fact, the European Commission has implemented a corporate policy that emphasizes corporations’ responsibility to work in the best interest of stakeholders rather than shareholders, which is reflected in the workweeks of many European cultures (Zhang, Straub, & Kusk, 2007). For example, in Europe, UK has the second longest working week

(about 45 hours per week), whereas Sweden and France are known for their 35 – 40 hour workweek (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006). The “average annual working hours in the United States exceed the average for Japan and for all Western European countries, except the Czech Republic and Hungary” (Murphy & Sauter, 2003, p. 152). Thus, in Anglo countries the workweek tends to be longer than in Scandinavia and France. Therefore, once management, in a culture endorsing a “work to live” attitude, demands employees to work long hours it might have a more negative effect on their attitudes toward their organization. Indeed, Wittenkamp and Glazer found that Nordics have higher work conflict than Eastern Europeans. Nordics value leisure time more than work, whereas Eastern Europeans value work more than leisure time. Also, Zhang et al., found that the French rate quality of life higher than Canadians do. Because of these social differences, U.S. Americans might experience fewer role stressors because they are not pressured to work within a confined timeline as are Latin- and Nordic-Europeans. However, this interpretation is speculative because the present study did not measure actual hours of work.

#### *Level of Social Support across Cultures*

Latin Americans reported significantly more supervisor social support than Latin Europeans and Confucian Asians, and significantly more organizational social support than Americans and Canadians, Latin Europeans, Nordic Europeans, Germanic Europeans, Confucian Asians, and Anglo Europeans. Initially, one may question why supervisor social support and organizational social support is greater

in Latin America since Latin America has traditionally been described as valuing Collectivism (Hofstede, 1980) where supervisor social support tend to be low. However, the GLOBE study found that Latin America endorses In-Group Collectivism, but not Institutional Collectivism reflecting a culture where individuals are loyal towards the organization or family but do not necessarily share resources and sacrifice individual goals for the good of the group. This may be a reason why Latin Americans perceive high supervisor social support. Furthermore, Latin America has been described to have a paternalistic culture (Osland et al., 1999) suggesting that supervisors oversee their subordinates as a father would oversee his children. The same reasoning is considered for organizational support. As described by Romero (2004), Latin American leaders tend to value good working relationships and it may be a combination of the In-Group Collectivism, family oriented work practices, and a desire to develop good working relationships that reinforce social support from both the supervisor and the organization in Latin America (vs. Latin Europe and Confucian Asia). Also, a common practice in Latin American organizations is to hire family members (Gomez & Sanchez, 1999); thus, it may be that there are family ties in the organization where one's supervisor is part of one's family. These findings are congruent with Glazer (2006) who found that Latin Americans perceive more supervisor emotional support than Asians.

In cultures endorsing Institutional Collectivism, such as Confucian Asia, team work is encouraged and group loyalty is emphasized. Due to these values,

supervisor support may be perceived less in order to keep group harmony. When supervisors provide support to one individual, the supervisor may be seen as favoring certain employees, which can cause a loss of face for the targeted employee (Glazer, 2006). Alternatively, it may be that group members do not seek supervisor social support because they do not want to disturb the group harmony by seeking special treatment from their supervisor (Glazer; Taylor et al., 2004).

In terms of coworker social support, findings show that in Australia and New Zealand coworker social support was significantly greater than that in Latin Europe, Nordic Europe, Germanic Europe, Confucian Asia, and Anglo Europe. The high value of Autonomy and Mastery (Schwartz, 1999) may be a reason for the high levels of coworker support. Individuals in such cultures are assertive and high achievers who will do what it takes to achieve desired results. This might be one of the reasons why Australians and New Zealanders with high Autonomy values still had significantly lower role stressors than Latin Europe, Nordic Europe, and Germanic Europe (see Table 5). In fact, results show that people in Australia and New Zealand scored high on all types of social support.

It may be because of the high social support that Australians and New Zealanders are able to keep role stressors low despite high Autonomy values. Southern Asians and Latin Americans reported significantly greater coworker social support than Latin Europeans, Nordic Europeans, Germanic Europeans, and Confucian Asians. Both Southern Asians and Latin Americans endorse In-Group



Collectivism which then may be a cultural characteristic that contribute to the amount of coworker support perceived. In Glazer's (2006) study, people in cultures endorsing Schwartz's cultural characteristic of Conservatism perceived high levels of coworker social support. Schwartz's cultural value of Conservatism is similar to GLOBE's (House et al., 2004) cultural characteristic of In-Group Collectivism. Both cultural characteristics (i.e., Conservatism and In-Group Collectivism) are described as a need to maintain group harmony in their organization or family, and it is, therefore, likely that coworker social support is high in such cultures.

#### *Relationship between Stressors and Attitudes across Cultures*

Consistent with other studies (e.g., Beehr & Glazer, 2001; Jex & Bliese, 1999; Podsakoff et al., 2007), the relationship between stressors and attitudes was supported. The direct effects model remains the same across cultures confirming that as employees experience role stressors the less favorable their work attitudes become. These results indicate that work stressors relate to unfavorable work-related attitudes, regardless of culture.

#### *Relationship between Social Support and Attitudes across Cultures*

A significant positive relationship was found between social support (i.e., coworker, supervisor, and organizational) and favorable attitudes across all cultures. This is consistent with other studies (e.g., Beehr & Drexler, 1986; Beehr et al., 2000; Ducharme & Martin, 2000) indicating that as employees experience social support the more favorable their work attitudes become. This supports the direct effects

model where social support relates with more favorable attitudes regardless of culture.

*Social Support as a Moderator of Stressor-Attitude Relationship*

Cross-cultural research requires analyses that include multiple comparisons. It has been argued that when doing multiple comparisons one needs to control for Type I error. However, in cross-cultural research, researchers look for patterns that may explain differences between cultures, leading to a more exploratory interpretation of results. As described by Vijver and Leung (1997) “[a] major strength of these studies is their ‘open-mindedness’ about cross-cultural differences” (p. 135) and the exploratory approach to cross-cultural research can provide important clues for future research. Therefore, Type I error was not controlled for as cultural context is itself expected to influence when social support moderates the focal relationship.

In Germanic Europe, as role stressors increase, favorable attitudes decrease for those with high supervisor support and for those with high organizational social support. The Germanic culture of high Performance Orientation in combination with both low In-Group Collectivism and Institutional Collectivism (i.e., Individualism, Javidan & House, 2001) may be a reason for these findings. In high performance cultures, development of employees is important; individuals like a direct communication style, and a “can-do” attitude (Javidan & House). One would expect that in Germanic Europe supervisor social support would help employees

deal with role stressors. However, since Germanic Europe is an Individualistic culture with high Performance Orientation (House et al., 2004) and Intellectual Autonomy (Schwartz, 1999), it is likely that employees want to control the amount of supervisor social support and initiate it on their own terms. If supervisor social support is provided without employees wanting it, it may result in a reverse buffering effect as the support may be perceived as interruption rather than support.

Alternatively, it may be that the source of the stressor and the social support is the same (i.e., source congruency) and, therefore, employees develop less favorable attitudes toward the organization. For example, if employees are experiencing role stressors, such as inadequate resources, role ambiguity, or role overload those stressors may derive from the supervisor's incompetence to clearly communicate the role. In such situations, the supervisor's attempt to support employees may be more detrimental than helpful and, therefore, favorable attitudes decrease more with high supervisor social support than with low supervisor social support when role stressors are high.

In USA and Canada, supervisor social support did not moderate the relationship between stressors and favorable attitudes, but organizational support did. It may be that while organizational social support helps reduce stressors, supervisor social support does not because the stressors may derive from the supervisor (Kaufmann & Beehr, 1986). Alternatively, high values of Individualism and Performance Orientation, in combination with mid-score on Power Distance

(House et al., 2004) may contribute to this moderating effect. In such cultures, employees may not trust that their supervisor has control over role-related stressors, such as inadequate resources, and therefore employees rely more on organizational social support to cope with role stressors. Note that if one takes the opinion that to deem this interaction effect as significant requires controlling for Type I error, these results would not be considered significant.

In Latin Europe, as role stressors increased, favorable attitudes decreased more for those with high supervisor support than for those with low supervisor support. These results may be due to the low Institutional Collectivism, where little value is put on sharing resources, and high Power Distance where individuals accept the different levels of power in the organization. In such a culture, supervisors may indicate that more resources will be provided, but without delivering on such promises due to limited access to upper management. For example, if an employee experiences inadequate resources he or she may approach his or her supervisor for support to get more resources; however, in cultures with low Institutional Collectivism (i.e., where sharing of resources is not valued) and high Power Distances (i.e., where individuals accept differences of power), the supervisor may have limited access to get more resources. Thus, the supervisor is not able to provide additional resources as needed.

Furthermore, as discussed previously, Latin Europeans have short work weeks and have a “work to live” attitude where work is a necessity to get a pay-

check but not one of the priorities of life. Thus, a problem such as inadequate resources may be seen as the supervisors' problem and employees simply do not take any ownership in not being able to perform their work. If the supervisor provides social support, in such an event, employees will likely develop less favorable attitudes toward the organization, because he or she does not feel it is his or her responsibility to resolve such problems but rather their supervisor's responsibility. Therefore, when role stressors are high employees may express less favorable attitudes toward the organization when supervisor social support is high than when supervisor social support is low. It may also be that, similar to Germanic Europe, the source of the stressors and social support is the same, namely the supervisor. Again, if one takes the opinion that to deem this interaction effect as significant requires controlling for Type I error, these results would not be considered significant.

In summary, different cultural characteristics, and not just In-Group Collectivism, may explain differences found across cultures on role stressors, social support, and the stressor-attitude relationship. When studying social support, Collectivism and Power Distance may be important factors to consider. In cultural regions endorsing In-Group Collectivism, such as Latin America and Southern Asia, people perceived the greatest amount of coworker-, supervisor-, and organizational-social support. When studying the moderating effects of social support on the stressor-attitude relationship, a reverse buffering effect was found in Latin Europe

and Germanic Europe. These cultures are similar on Mastery and Autonomy values. A culture high on Autonomy values emphasizes employees' needs and preferences to be left alone to complete their work, using their own creativity, curiosity, and broadmindedness (Schwartz, 1999); thus, supervisor- or organizational-support may be perceived as interference rather than support. Finally, a moderating effect was found for organizational social support in USA and Canada which is an Individualistic and Performance Oriented culture (Hofstede, 1980; House et al., 2004) with mid-scores on Power Distance (House et al.). It appears that in such cultures employees may not believe supervisors have control over role stressors; thus, they rely on organizational support to cope with role stressors.

It is clear from this research that culture makes a difference in stressor-attitude relationships and should therefore be considered when conducting research on stressors, attitudes, and social support. Furthermore, these findings indicate that organizational social support may be more important in cultures characterized by Individualism, Performance Orientation, and with some Power Distances between job levels. Human Resources (HR) practitioners should, in these cultures, emphasize the importance of clear and consistent messaging from leadership to enforce a supportive corporate culture. For example, this study shows that people in USA and Canada perceive significantly less organizational social support than Latin Americans; however, in USA and Canada organizational social support has a moderating effect on the stressor-attitude relationship. As results show, when

employees in USA and Canada perceive high role stressors, those with more organizational support have a more favorable attitudes towards the organization than those with low organizational support. Therefore, HR practitioners in USA and Canada might want to emphasize organizational social support as a crucial component of stress management in order to help employees cope with role stressors and to improve favorable attitudes toward the organization.

### *Implications*

Results suggest that HR training should include information about cultural characteristics that may impact employees' perceptions of social support (Glazer, 2006). Findings also indicate that organizations may benefit from incorporating policies and procedures that emphasize how the organization values employees' contributions by communicating how employees' roles and responsibilities contribute to the overarching goal and strategy of the company. By doing this, employees will have a better understanding of their roles in reaching company goals and thereby contributing to company success.

### *Limitations*

Although the results of the present study expand the understanding of the potential importance of culture on the stressor-favorable attitude relationships, the study has limitations. First, the present study used archival data and therefore there is no control over variables assessed, potentially causing difficulty with scale development across cultures. Although the factor analysis indicated reliable and

valid measures for role stressors, favorable attitudes, and social support, developing scales *post-hoc* can often be problematic. For example, although factor loadings were generally good in each cultural region, factor loadings for coworker social support items were not particularly strong in Nordic Europe (.36). Nonetheless, because reliability is important to establish before validity, and for the worldwide sample the factor loadings were good, we retained the items that reflect social support.

Factor loadings for the coworker social support variable in Nordic Europe may be low due to the low Power Distance and team-oriented culture. Coworker support may not be much different from supervisor- or organizational-social support since leadership is often integrated into the team and leadership is characterized by a participative- rather than an authoritative-decision-making style (Holmberg & Åkerblom, 2006). It is not unusual for managers in Sweden to seek input and feedback from their subordinates. Furthermore, in Nordic Europe it is important to be part of a team and not “stick out” and be different, this is called Jantelagen. As described by Robinowitz and Carr (2001) “Swedes internalize the concept from a very early age: don’t boast about yourself; let your actions speak for themselves” (p. 85). In other words, Jantelagen is rooted in the Swedish culture at an early stage when parents tell their children not to brag about their accomplishments, but rather praise others’ achievements. It is likely that coworker support is similar to both supervisor- and organizational-social support as teams are comprised of all job



levels and everyone endorses the cultural value of jantelagen and value being part of the group. In Sweden, the survey item “Team work is encouraged in this organization” loaded on all three factors with the highest factor loading on organizational support (.48). Due to strong factor loadings in other cultural regions this item was kept within coworker social support.

Another reason why factor loadings were low in certain cultural regions may be due to translation issues and the fact that the survey was created in the United States by American employees. In fact, factor analysis results for USA and Canada had strong loadings on each of the separate social support variables, as well as favorable attitudes and role stressors. Survey items were translated into the dominant language for the majority of nations; however the translations were not subjected to a back-translation as recommended by Werner and Campbell (1970). Therefore, item interpretation may have been different depending on the cultural region and language in which the survey was completed and may have been a reason for lower factor loadings in some regions. Due to these limitations, one should be cautious when interpreting these results.

Another limitation to this study is the small sample size in some of the cultural regions. In order to find a moderator effect, large sample sizes are needed, as well as good internal reliability (Whisman & McClelland, 2005). Measures in this study had good reliability across cultural regions (ranging from .83 in Germanic Europe to .91 in USA and Canada, Nordic Europe, and Anglo Europe); however,

sample size in some of the cultural regions (e.g., Latin America  $n = 57$ , Southern Asia  $n = 77$ , Australia and New Zealand  $n = 82$ , Nordic Europe  $n = 95$ ) may have been too small to find a moderator effect. As stated by Whisman and McClelland, "...samples of more than 200 participants may be necessary for having adequate power for detecting interactions with medium effect sizes using measures with reliabilities of .70" (p. 116). The reason why a moderator effect was found in cultures with less than 200 participants may have been due to the good reliability of at least .80. The current study might have found a moderator effect in some other cultural regions if the sample size would have been larger. Nevertheless, as discussed earlier, Type I error rate should also be considered when doing multiple moderator regression analyses because of the many comparisons included in such analyses, in this case 27 comparisons. When taking this into consideration, one might question if all interactions found in this study were inflated due to Type I error rates. Nevertheless, after controlling for Type I error, the interaction found for organizational support in Germanic Europe is still significant. Due to both power and Type I error issues, the moderating effects of USA and Canada, as well as Latin Europe should be interpreted with caution.

Also, when conducting cross-cultural research one would ideally create regions prior to collecting data to try to get equivalent sample sizes, and possibly confirming cultural values when conducting the survey. This was not possible as the data were archival.

Finally, the current study measured role stressors with an index of role ambiguity, role overload, and inadequate resources, limiting the ability to analyze each role stressor separately. As found by Peterson and colleagues (1995), each measure of role ambiguity, role overload, and role conflict correlates differently with cultural values (both magnitude and direction). Similarly, Glazer and Beehr (2005) found that different role stressors correlate differently with outcome variables. Future studies should examine each role stressor in relation to distinct organizational outcomes.

Despite these limitations, this research is still valuable in that it represents a real organization with operations worldwide. Furthermore, the data were collected within a four-week period, thereby controlling for any historical changes that might have otherwise occurred when a survey was administered to a large set of data, spanning across nine cultural regions.

#### *Future Research and Direction*

This study investigated perceptions of coworker-, supervisor-, and organizational-social support across nine cultural regions. As stated by Jawahar et al. (2007), much research has focused on social support received from supervisors or coworkers, and little research (Richardson et al., 2008; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006), has been conducted to examine how organizational support relates to role stressors. The current study supports findings of Jawahar and colleagues indicating that organizational social support negatively relates to role stressors and moderates

role stressor-attitude relationships in some cultures. Nevertheless, there needs to be more cross-cultural studies to better understand when, how, and why social support moderates the relationship between stressors and favorable attitudes.

Furthermore, research in more cultural regions is warranted. For example, no data were gathered from Eastern Europe or Africa in the current study. In general, more research is needed to better understand how stressor-attitude relationships differ across cultures and how different types of social support (i.e., emotional vs. instrumental), as well as different sources of social support (e.g., family, friends) may impact these relationships.

In addition to social support, the current study examined role stressors and favorable attitudes; however, future research may also explore specific role stressors (e.g., role conflict) and specific attitudes (e.g., organizational commitment) across numerous cultures, as well as other moderating variables (e.g., locus of control). Future research could also include behavioral strains, such as absenteeism to get a better understanding of role stressors' impact on the organization's return on investment.

### Conclusion

This study provides insight to the importance of understanding and considering culture when studying social support in relation to role stressors and job related attitudes. The study highlights significant cultural differences, not only in the mean scores for role stressors, and social support, but also in the relationship

between role stressors and favorable attitudes, social support and favorable attitudes, and the moderator effects of three social support sources on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship. Both coworker- and supervisor-social support have been found to moderate the relationship between stressors and favorable attitudes, but no study thus far has established a moderating effect of organizational support on the stressor-favorable attitude relationship. This study found that supervisor- and organizational-social support each moderates the role stressor-favorable attitudes relationship in certain cultures, including Germanic Europe, USA and Canada, and Latin Europe.

The present study has confirmed the need to study stressors, favorable attitudes, and social support across cultures as culture indeed affects attitudes and behaviors. This also implies that companies need to pay close attention to cultural differences as they expand their businesses across cultural boundaries and one approach to reducing stressors may not work in another culture.

## References

- Allen, D. G. (2003). The role of perceived organizational support and supportive human resources practices in the turnover process. *Journal of Management*, 29, 99–118.
- Beehr, T. A. (1998). An organizational psychology meta-model of occupational stress. An organizational psychology meta-model of occupational stress. In C.L. Cooper (Ed.), *Theories of Organizational Stress* (pp. 6-27). New York: Oxford, University Press.
- Beehr, T. A., & Drexler, J. A. (1986). Social support, autonomy, and hierarchical level as moderators of the role characteristic-outcome relationship. *Journal of Occupational Behavior*, 7, 207-214.
- Beehr, T. A., Farmer, S. J., Glazer, S., Gudanski, D. M., & Nair, V. N. (2003). The enigma of social support and occupational stress: Source congruence and gender role effects. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 8, 220-231.
- Beehr, T. A., & Glazer, S. (2001). A cultural perspective of social support in relation to occupational stress. In P. Perrewe, D. C. Ganster, & J. Moran (Eds.), *Research in Occupational Stress and Well-Being* (pp. 97-102). JAI Press: Greenwich, CO.
- Beehr, T. A., & Glazer, S. (2005). Organizational role stress. In J. Barling, E. K. Kelloway, & F. M. R. Frone (Eds.), *Handbook of work stress* (pp. 7-33). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Beehr, T. A., Jex, S. M., Stacy, B. A., & Murray, M. A. (2000). Work stressors and coworker support as predictors of individual strain and job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 21, 391-405.
- Berlin, J., & Glazer, S. (2007, July). *Social support and job satisfaction across 13 countries*. Paper presented at the International Association for Intercultural Research conference, Groningen, Netherlands.
- Bhagat, R. S., Kedia, B. L., Harveston, P. D., & Triandis, H. C. (2002). Cultural variations in the cross-border transfer of organizational knowledge: An integrative framework. *Academy of Management Review*, 27, 204-221.

- Bhagat, R. S., O'Driscoll, M. P., Babakus, E., Frey, L., Chokkar, J., Ninokumar, H. B., et al. (1994). Organizational stress and coping in seven national contexts: A cross-cultural investigation. In Keita, G. P., & Hurrell, J. J. (Eds.), *Job stress in a changing workforce: Investigating gender, diversity, and family issues* (pp. 93-105). Washington, DC: American Psychology Association.
- Bowling, N. A., Beehr, T. A., Johnson, A. L., Semmer, N. K., Hendricks, E. A., & Webster, H. A. (2004). Explaining potential antecedents of workplace social support: Reciprocity or attractiveness? *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 9*, 339-350.
- Brew, F. P., & Cairns, D. R. (2004). Do culture or situational constraints determine choice of direct or indirect styles in intercultural workplace conflicts? *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 28*, 331-352.
- Chen, Z., Eisenberger, R., Johnson, K. M., Sucharski, I. L., & Aselage, J. (In press). Perceived organizational support and extra-role performance: Which leads to which? *Journal of Social Psychology*. Retrieved February 18, 2009, from [http://eisenberger.psych.udel.edu/files/POS\\_performance.pdf](http://eisenberger.psych.udel.edu/files/POS_performance.pdf)
- Cohen, S., & Wills, T. A. (1985). Stress, social support, and the buffering hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin, 98*, 310-357.
- Cooper, C. L., Dewe, P. J., & O'Driscoll, M. P. (2001). *Organizational stress: A review and critique of theory, research, and applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crompton, R., & Lyonette, C. (2006). Work-life 'balance' in Europe. *Acta Sociologica, 49*, 379-393.
- Dormann, C., & Zapf, D. (1999). Social support, social stressors at work, and depressive symptoms: Testing for main and moderating effects with structural equations in a three-wave longitudinal study. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 84*, 874-884.
- Ducharme, L. J., & Martin J. K. (2000). Unrewarding work, coworker support, and job satisfaction: A test of the buffering hypothesis. *Work and Occupations, 27*, 223-243.
- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*, 500-507.

- Francesco, A. M., & Gold, B. A. (1998). *International organizational behaviour-text, readings, cases & skills*. London: Prentice-Hall.
- Fu, P. P., & Yukl, G. (2000) Perceived effectiveness of influence tactics in the United States and China. *Leadership Quarterly*, 11, 251-266.
- Glazer, S. (2006). Social support across cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30, 605-622.
- Glazer, S. (2008). Cross-cultural issues in stress and burnout. In J. R. B. Halbesleben (Ed.), *Handbook of Stress and Burnout in Health Care*. (pp. 79-93). Nova Science.
- Glazer, S., & Beehr, T. A. (2005). Consistency of implications of three role stressors across four countries. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26, 467-487.
- Gomez, C., & Sanchez, J. I. (1999). HR's strategic role within MNC's: Helping build social capital in Latin America. *International Journal of Human Resources Management*, 16, 2189-2200.
- Greenberg, J., & Baron, R. A. (1999). *Behavior in Organizations* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. London: Sage.
- Holmberg, I., & Åkerblom, S. (2006). Modelling leadership – Implicit leadership theories in Sweden. *Journal of Scandinavian Management*, 22, 307-329.
- House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidian, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (2004). *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Jamal, M. (2007). Job stress and job performance controversy revisited: An empirical examination of two countries. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 14, 175-187.
- Jawahar, I. M., Stone, T. H., & Kisamore, J. L. (2007). Role conflict and burnout: The direct and moderating effects of political skill and perceived organizational support on burnout dimensions. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 14, 142-159.



- Jex, S. M., & Bliese, P. D., (1999). Efficacy beliefs as a moderator of the impact of work-related stressors: A multilevel study. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84, 349-361.
- Joiner, T. A. (2001). The influence of national culture and organizational culture alignment on job stress and performance: Evidence from Greece. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 16, 229-242.
- Kaufmann, G. M., & Beehr, T. A. (1986). Interactions between job stressors and social support: Some counterintuitive results. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71, 522-526.
- Kluckhohn, F. R., & Strodtbeck, F. L. (1961). *Variations in value orientations*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Kuchinke, P. K. (1999). Leadership style among one company's U.S. and German telecommunication employees. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 10, 135-154.
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. New York: Springer.
- Liang, B., & Bogat, A. G. (1994). Culture, control, and coping: New perspectives on social support. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 22, 123-147.
- Liu, C., Spector, P. E., & Shi, L. (2007). Cross-national job stress: A quantitative and qualitative study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 28, 209-239.
- Mansell, A., Brough, P., & Cole, K. (2006). Stable predictors of job satisfaction, psychological strain, and employee retention: An evaluation of organizational change within the New Zealand customs service. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 13, 84-107.
- McClelland, D. C. (1961). *The achieving society*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand.
- Murphy, L. R., & Sauter, S. L. (2003). The USA perspective: Current issues and trends in the management of work stress. *Australian Psychologist*, 38, 151-157.

- Narayanan, L., Menon, S., & Spector, P. (1999). A cross-cultural comparison of job stressors and reactions among employees holding comparable jobs in two countries. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 6, 197-212.
- Osland, J. S., De Franco, S., & Osland, A. (1999). Organizational implications of Latin American culture: Lessons for the expatriate manager. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 8, 219-234.
- Pal, S., & Saksvik, P. O. (2008). Work-Family conflict and psychosocial work environment stressors as predictors of job stress in a cross-cultural study. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 15, 22-42.
- Peterson, M. F., Smith, P. B., Akande, A., Ayestaran, S., Bochner, S., Callan, V., et al. (1995). Role conflict, ambiguity, and overload: A 21-nation study. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38, 429-452.
- Podsakoff, N. P., LePine J. A., & LePine, M. A. (2007). Differential challenge stressor-hindrance stressor relationships with job attitudes, turnover intentions, turnover, and withdrawal behavior: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92, 438-454.
- Richardson, H. A., Yang, J., Vendenberg, R. J., DeJoy, D. M., & Wilson, M. G. (2008). Perceived organizational support's role in stressor-strain relationships. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23, 789-810.
- Robinowitz, C. J., & Carr, L. M. (2001). *Modern-day Vikings: A practical guide to interacting with the Swedes*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- Romero, E. J. (2004). Latin American leadership: El Patron & El Lider Moderno. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 11, 23-37.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Beyond individualism-collectivism: New cultural dimensions of values.). In U. Kim, H. C. Triandis, C. Kagitcibasi, S. C. Choi, & G. Yoon (Eds.), *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, method and applications* (pp. 85-119). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1999). A theory of cultural values and some implications for work. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 48, 23-47.

- Semmer, N. K., McGrath, J. E., & Beehr, T. A. (2005). Conceptual issues I research on stress and health. In C. L. Coopoer (Ed.), *Handbook of stress medicine and health Second Edition* (pp. 1-43). London: CRC Press.
- Shanock, L. R., & Eisenberger, R. (2006). When supervisors feel supported: Relationship with subordinates' perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91, 689-695.
- Shore, L. M., & Wayne, S. J. (1993). Commitment and employee behavior: Comparison of affective commitment and continuance commitment with perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78, 774-780.
- Singh, J. (1998). Striking a balance in boundary-spanning positions: An investigation of some unconventional influences of role stressors and job characteristics on job outcomes of sales people. *Journal of Marketing*, 62, 69-86.
- Siu, O. (2002). Occupational stressors and well-being among Chinese employees: The role of organizational commitment. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 51, 527-544.
- Taris, W. T., Schreurs, G. J. P., & Van Iersel-Van Silfhout, J. I. (2001). Job stress, Job strain, and psychological withdrawal among Dutch university staff: Towards a dual- process model for the effects of occupational stress. *Work & Stress*, 15, 283-296.
- Taylor, S. E., Sherman, D. K., Kim, H. S., Jarcho, J., Takagi, K., & Dunagan, M. S. (2004). Culture and social support: Who seeks it and why? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87, 354-362.
- Tinsley, H. E. A., & Tinsley, D. J. (1987). Uses of factor analysis in counseling psychology research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 34, 414-424.
- Van de Vijver, F., & Leung, K. (1997). *Methods and data analysis for cross-cultural research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Viswesvaran, C., Sanchez, J. A., & Fisher J. (1999). The role of social support in the process of work stress: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 54, 314-334.

- Werner, O., & Campbell, D. T. (1970). *Translating, working through interpreters, and the problem of decentering*. In R. Naroll & R. Cohen (Eds.), *A handbook of cultural anthropology* (pp. 398-419). New York: American Museum of Natural History.
- Wittenkamp, C., & Glazer, S. (2007, July). *Work centrality and work values: A 22-European nation study*. Paper presented at the International Association for Intercultural Research conference, Groningen, Netherlands.
- Wong, K. S., Cheuk, W. H., & S. Rosen. (2000). The influence of job stress and supervisor support on negative affects and job satisfaction in kindergarten principals. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, 15, 85-98.
- Zhang, Y., Straub, C., & Kusyk, S. (2007). Making a life or making a living? Cross cultural comparisons of business students' work and life values in Canada and France. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 14, 174-195.

Appendix A  
*Letter of Permission*

## Permission for adaptation of table for thesis work

2 messages

Maria Staffansson <maria.staffansson@gmail.com>  
To: permissions@sagepub.com

Wed, Feb 20, 2008 at 5:43 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am working on my thesis and am using the GLOBE study to create cultural clusters. In order to depict these clusters and how they differ in cultural values I have created that attached tables that I want to include in my thesis. How do I go about getting the permission to publish these tables? At this point, this will only be used for my thesis but it is possible that I will publish in a journal at a later date and if so I'd like to have the permission for these tables as well.

Please advice.

Many Thanks,  
Maria Staffansson  
San Jose State University

Note: Please disregard the blue text in these tables as I clearly don't have the permission to reproduce these tables yet.

### 3 attachments

 Table 1.doc  
26K

 Table 2.doc  
35K

 Table 3.doc  
28K

permissions (US) <permissions@sagepub.com>  
To: Maria Staffansson <maria.staffansson@gmail.com>

Thu, Feb 21, 2008 at 8:05 AM

Dear Ms. Staffansson,

Thank you for your request. Please consider this written permission to use/adapt the material detailed below for use in your thesis. Proper attribution to the original source should be included. This permission does not include any 3<sup>rd</sup> party material found within the work. Please contact us for any future usage or publication of your thesis.

Best,

Adele

## Appendix B IRB Approval



**Office of the Provost  
Associate Vice President  
Graduate Studies & Research**

One Washington Square  
San José, CA 95192-0025  
Voice: 408-924-2427  
Fax: 408-924-2477

E-mail: [gradstudies@sjsu.edu](mailto:gradstudies@sjsu.edu)  
<http://www.sjsu.edu>

To: Maria Staffansson

From: Pamela Stacks, Ph.D.  
Associate Vice President  
Graduate Studies and Research

Date: November 30, 2007

The Human Subjects-Institutional Review Board has approved your request to use secondary data related to human subjects in the study entitled:

"Social support as a moderator of the stressor-strain relationship: does culture or organizational level make a difference?"

This approval, which provides exempt status under Category D, is contingent upon the subjects included in your research project being appropriately protected from risk. Specifically, protection of the anonymity of the subjects' identity with regard to all data that may be collected about the subjects from your secondary sources needs to be ensured.

The approval includes continued monitoring of your research by the Board to assure that the subjects are being adequately and properly protected from such risks. If at any time a subject becomes injured or complains of injury, you must notify Dr. Pamela Stacks, Ph.D. immediately. Injury includes but is not limited to bodily harm, psychological trauma, and release of potentially damaging personal information. This approval for the human subject's portion of your project is in effect for one year, and data collection beyond November 30, 2008 requires an extension request.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (408) 924-2480.

Protocol # S0704102

cc: Sharon Glazer, 0120

The California State University:  
Chancellor's Office  
Bakersfield, Channel Islands, Chico,  
Dominguez Hills, East Bay, Fresno,  
Fullerton, Humboldt, Long Beach,  
Los Angeles, Maritime Academy,  
Monterey Bay, Northridge, Pomona,  
Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego,  
San Francisco, San José, San Luis Obispo,  
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

## Appendix C

### *Survey Questions*

#### ROLE STRESSORS

1. I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.
2. I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.
3. The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.
4. I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.
5. Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.

#### ORGANIZTIONAL SOCIAL SUPPORT

1. Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.
2. Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.
3. Senior Management creates a learning environment and supports our development.
4. Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.
5. Senior Management is approachable and engaging.
6. I am encouraged to come up with new ideas.
7. I receive the training I need to develop my skills.
8. I am encouraged to take risks so that we can be an innovative organization.

#### SUPERVISOR SOCIAL SUPPORT

1. My manager is good at motivating me.
2. My manager makes time for me.
3. My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.
4. My manager cares about me as a person.
5. My manager is approachable.
6. My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.
7. My manager coaches and mentors my development.
8. My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.
9. My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.
10. I receive praise and recognition when I do a good job.

#### COWORKER SOCIAL SUPPORT

1. People at this organization are approachable and engaging.
2. People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.
3. People are treated with respect.
4. Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.
5. In my organization, when people say they will do something, they do it.
6. We treat our associates and candidates with respect.

### FAVORABLE ATTITUDES

1. Overall I am satisfied with my present job.
2. I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.
3. I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.
4. I am proud of the work I do.
5. I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.
6. I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.
7. I am proud to work for the organization.

### DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

1. What is your level within Right Management?
  - ☐ Global Corporate Leadership, General Manager
  - ☐ Regional and Hub Leadership (MVPs, Practice Leader)
  - ☐ Consultant (CMCs and OCs), Sales and Account Management (CSC)
  - ☐ Professional Staff such as Project Coordinators, Administrators
  - ☐ Senior Manager (VP, Country Manager, Director)
2. How long have you worked for the company?
  - ☐ Less than 6 months
  - ☐ Between 6 months and 1 year
  - ☐ Between 1 and 3 years
  - ☐ Between 3 and 5 years
  - ☐ Over 5 years
3. What age bracket are you in?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 41-49
<input type="checkbox"/> 25-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-64
<input type="checkbox"/> 36-40	<input type="checkbox"/> 65+
4. Are you...
  - ☐ Male   ☐ Female



Appendix D  
*Factor Analyses within Regions*

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
<i>United States/Canada</i>					
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.73				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.75				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.69				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.79				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.80				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.83			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.80			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.78			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.78			
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.84		
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.			0.83		
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.80		

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager coaches and mentors my development.			0.78		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.84		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.79		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.77	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.				0.79	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.				0.77	
Overall I am satisfied with my present job.					0.77
I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.					0.80
I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.					0.81
I am proud of the work I do.					0.74
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.81

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.73
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.87
<i>Latin Europe</i>					
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.66				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.51				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.39				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.71				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.54				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.80			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.83			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.83			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.75			
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.83		

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.			0.87		
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.76		
My manager coaches and mentors my development.			0.84		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.85		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.80		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.69	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.				0.84	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.				0.64	
I am proud of the work I do.					0.75
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.83
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.76

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.83
<i>Nordic Europe</i>					
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.81				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.71				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.62				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.84				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.74				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.77			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.82			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.74			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.48			
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.81		
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.			0.87		
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.76		

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager coaches and mentors my development.		0.47	0.72		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.88		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.74		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.89	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.				0.67	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.		0.48		0.36	
Overall I am satisfied with my present job.					0.76
I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.					0.77
I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.					0.87
I am proud of the work I do.					0.68
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.83
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.65

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.88
<i>Germanic Europe</i>					
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.66				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.66				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.62				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.80				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.67				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.72			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.71			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.84			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.85			
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.79		
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.			0.77		
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.72		



Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager coaches and mentors my development.			0.80		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.72		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.69		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.80	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.				0.86	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.				0.61	
Overall I am satisfied with my present job.					0.66
I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.					0.83
I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.					0.74
I am proud of the work I do.					0.72
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.73

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.63
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.85
<i>Latin America</i>					
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.67				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.76				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.84				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.7				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.81				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.83			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.83			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.74			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.69		0.47	
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.72		
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.		0.45	0.74		

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.49		
My manager coaches and mentors my development.			0.85		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.86		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.84		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.93	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.				0.85	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.				0.62	
Overall I am satisfied with my present job.					0.73
I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.					0.95
I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.					0.89
I am proud of the work I do.					0.87
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.92

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.88
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.92
<i>Southern Asia</i>					
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.78				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.61				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.75				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.79				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.87				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.84			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.79			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.72			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.72			
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.84		
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.			0.80		

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.59	0.53	
My manager coaches and mentors my development.			0.86		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.84		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.70		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.89	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.				0.69	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.				0.75	
Overall I am satisfied with my present job.					0.73
I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.					0.75
I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.					0.75
I am proud of the work I do.					0.75
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.86

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.85
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.87
<i>Confucian Asia</i>					
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.76				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.82				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.69				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.72				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.69				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.82			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.83			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.72			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.83			
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.85		
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.			0.86		

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.79		
My manager coaches and mentors my development.			0.81		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.83		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.72		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.84	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.				0.80	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.				0.78	
Overall I am satisfied with my present job.					0.75
I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.					0.78
I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.					0.76
I am proud of the work I do.					0.81
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.79

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.73
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.84
<i>Australia and New Zealand</i>					
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.71				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.57				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.55				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.75				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.76				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.90			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.71			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.88			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.74			
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.82		
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.			0.85		



Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.86		
My manager coaches and mentors my development.			0.75		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.89		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.83		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.70	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.		0.55		0.57	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.				0.75	
Overall I am satisfied with my present job.					0.73
I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.					0.85
I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.					0.85
I am proud of the work I do.					0.73

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.84
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.79
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.86
<i>Anglo Europe</i>					
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me at work.	0.74				
I receive the information I need to perform well in my job.	0.65				
The amount of work I am expected to do is reasonable.	0.69				
I have the equipment and/or materials I need to do my job well.	0.70				
Our work processes are generally well organized and efficient.	0.75				
Senior Management energizes and inspires us to be our best.		0.85			
Senior Management encourages new ideas and creative solutions.		0.78			
Senior Management enables employees to successfully deliver initiatives.		0.77			
Senior Management is approachable and engaging.		0.83			

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
My manager is good at motivating me.			0.80		
My manager provides candid and timely feedback about my performance.			0.82		
My manager communicates relevant information on a timely basis.			0.77		
My manager coaches and mentors my development.			0.77		
My manager helps me understand how my job contributes to the success of the organization.			0.81		
My manager encourages me to consider new ways of doing business and serving our clients.			0.78		
People at this organization are approachable and engaging.				0.78	
People work effectively across the organization to achieve common goals.				0.79	
Teamwork is encouraged in this organization.				0.73	
Overall I am satisfied with my present job.					0.69
I speak highly of my organization's brand and services.					0.81
I would recommend my organization to my friends and colleagues as a great place to work.					0.83

Items	Role Stressors	Organizational Support	Supervisor Support	Coworker Support	Favorable Attitudes
I am proud of the work I do.					0.79
I am committed to doing what is required to help the organization succeed.					0.81
I am committed to doing what is required to perform well in my job.					0.80
I am proud to work for the organization.					0.87